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# KRISHNA'S FLUTE

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APOSTLES OF FREEDOM  
BUILDERS OF TO-MORROW  
IN THE SIKH SANCTUARY  
*My Motherland Series*  
THE ARYAN IDEAL

# KRISHNA'S FLUTE

BY

PROF. T. L. VASWANI

Re. 1-8

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## IN THE DEPTHS

### I

*I look for a messenger from the Homeland.  
I wait for some news of the Beautiful One ;  
Thou seest the silent mystery in my heart ;  
Mine eyes rain tears ;  
And this sorrow slays.*

### II

*Strewn with disorder is my house, for Thou art  
away, my Love !  
And lost in Thy thought my mind hath wandered ;  
To the things which are a hint and memory of  
Thy cruel mercy ;  
Why art Thou long in coming ?  
The very ruins of my house remember Thee.*

### III

*Comrades ! did you but glimpse the Wonder I  
have worshipped.  
You would scatter your all in the search.*

*Comrades ! you must be ready to be drowned.  
To discover the Dweller in the Deep.  
Comrades ! ye seek Him on the level road,  
Ye offer Him but a bit,  
Or the swollen lip-homage of little faith.*

## IV

*The Flame in my Heart, -who kindled it but Thy  
Beauty.  
Shining through the veil of my sufferings in Thy  
search.  
In many lands and many ages ?  
The Flame burns ; I will not quench it ;  
Let it spend itself in Thy Quest.  
And in silent sorrow expire at Thy Feet.*

## V

*From the depths of my heart have I cried to  
Thee : Come !  
In the depths of my anguish have I looked for  
Thy Face ;  
All desire is sin save this :—to kiss the dust of  
Thy Feet,  
And be shielded by Thy Sacrificial love.  
O ! look on my longing with favour,  
That I may meet Thee in the Depths !*



## INTRODUCTION

**K**RISHNA is the Immortal of Indian History. There are young men, I know to whom the Name carries but little appeal. They read him in translations. Translations are often transformations. If they but read him in the inner encyclopædia of their hearts ! To me there is meaning in the words of the mediæval mystic who said : “ There is no service without devotion to Krishna. ” To me the very words Gokul and Dwarka and Brindaban and Mathura and Kurukshetra carry a message—a creed of life. Nor must I omit Somnath from the list. It is true Mahmud Ghazni fought the brave Brahmins of that place and destroyed the Great Temple. But it is also true that at Somnath Shri Krishna was wounded by the arrow of a Bhil ; at Somnath the Lord left his

body and passed on, as I believe, to help India on other planes and prepare her for her world mission. As a window is opened to let in the dawn, so have I opened my heart, again and again, to let in his love and be purified by his presence. I believe in the Inner Krishna. Many of this generation, alas! are forgetful of their pilgrimage, forgetful of India's destiny. They may recover the memory if they will meditate upon him and his message.

Destructive criticism has been directed, again and again, against the 'historicity' of Shri Krishna. Some have explained away Krishna's life as simply a product of the 'mythopœic' faculty of the primitive man striving to interpret marvels of solar phenomena! So attempts have been made, from time to time, to resolve the life of Jesus into a myth! The author of "Fathers of Jesus" has, in two volumes, tried to trace the origin of the Christ-life to solar-phenomena! The theories of the critics have vanished; Krishna and Jesus abide. There are critics whose view is voiced by Rev. Tisdall when he says: "The name (of Krishna) which signifies the 'Black' probably shows that he was originally a deity worshipped by

the aboriginal inhabitants of India and borrowed from them by their Aryan conquerors"! Krishna, according to this theory, becomes a non-Aryan deity taken up by the Aryans! An *avatara* rises above race-limitations; he belongs to East and West. But his life and teachings also reveal his human environment. And to study the Scriptures is to know that Krishna was an Aryan as Jesus was a Jew in modes of life and mental outlook. Those who speak of Krishna as a non-Aryan only show that they have little understanding of the Environment of the Krishna-story. There are critics, again, who argue that Krishna-idea is a plagiarism from Christianity! This theory was developed in a big volume by Dr. Lorinser. A similar view was expounded by Fr. Giorgi who argued that Krishna was simply a corruption of the name of Christ and that the Gita was a Hindu rendering of the Christian Gospels! The critics should have read Megasthenes. This Greek writer's book *Ta Indika* shows that Krishna-worship was in India as early as the third century B.C. The best answer, in a way, to Dr. Lorinser's theory is the theory of Volney who in 1791

suggested that Christ-worship in Europe was nothing but a poor imitation and a foreign<sup>1</sup> adaptation of the Krishna-cult in India ! It is true there are striking resemblances between the story of Jesus and that of Krishna. There are such resemblances, too, between the story of Jesus and that of Buddha. Christ speaks of himself in the *New Testament* as the "Son of Man" and "Before Abhram was I Am". So in the *Lalita Vistara* we have the conception of Buddha's divinity and pre-existence. What is more, we find that Buddha is also called "Purusha" (Man); on one occasion he is even called *Mahapurusha*. Krishna, again, speaks of himself in the Gita thus : "They who worship me with devotion, —they are in me and I in them." "He who knoweth me, unborn, beginningless, the Great Lord of the world, he among mortals is without delusion ; he is liberated from all sins." "Having pervaded the whole Universe with a portion of myself, I exist."

These and other resemblances between Krishna, Buddha and Jesus are very striking. But they indicate *not* that one borrowed from another but that the three are *avatars* of the

One who is the inspiration of the ages. That word *Avatara* is significant. It suggests the idea of periodic 'descent' or appearance of the God-self. If, indeed, history be not an, infinite comedy of illusion,' we must admit that in some way God-life is dominant over the material forces of civilization. There is a Spiritual Force somewhere, a spiritual Creative Power without which history would be but 'a weak and wailing outcry'. A spiritual Creative Power entering into a human form—that is what I mean by *avatara*. Rightly has it been said in the Hindu scriptures that an *avatara* has no *Karma*. He is a vehicle of God. An *avatara* comes to create a Regenerative Revolution. He comes in answer to a world-cry. He comes with a message which though for a particular *yuga* (Age) is not for a particular class or nation but for Humanity. The Krishna-life has these marks and has rightly, as I believe, been adored through the ages of Hindu history as the life of an *avatar*. Krishna, Buddha and Jesus—the three in one, the one in three—appeared each at a critical point in human evolution. The appearance of each was, I believe, an *avatar*. A time-event—yes;

but its value is eternal. History is, to my mind, neither an 'illusion' nor a stream of 'becoming'; it is a time-vesture revealing some values of the Eternal. In the *avatars*, these values become a *creative* force. Krishna, Buddha and Jesus—each one of them, I believe, came with a power, a *shakti* of an Eternal Order. Each was confronted with an organised kingdom of 'unreality'. Each opposed to the world power a creative *shakti* which he had brought with him from an Unseen Kingdom.

The Essays and Adresses brought together in this volume indicate some aspects of the Creative *Shakti* as I have glimpsed them in moments of thought and meditation upon the mystery of that life which Hindu India has adored as Shri Krishna. In how many scriptures have not the Hindu mind and Hindu heart sung of him and his message? In the Gita, in the Mahabharata, in several Puranas, in the Vaishnav literature of Bengal, in many a mystic song of mediæval India, the inspiration is the life and message of Shri Krishna. It needs a number of volumes to interpret that gracious Life, that mighty Message. That I may

complete them before I am called to the Home land where his *bhaktas* dwell—is my aspiration. In the present volume I wish to share with Young India a few thoughts concerning the Master's Flute and its message to us in the Struggle for national freedom.

For think of him as I may—as a Boy in Gokul, a Playmate of the *Gopis*, an Inspirer of the Shepherds, a Teacher of Wisdom—as a Charioteer of Arjun and creator of a new Order in Aryavarta,—think of him as I may, it is the Figure of the Flute-Player which rises before me. And the Note his Flute sounded, again and again, was the note of Love—love for all—all men—love which embraced in its widening circle even the animal world. Who loved the Cow more tenderly than Krishna? The very *Gopis* are, in one Scripture, interpreted to mean the cows Shri Krishna loved! In more than one Scripture he is represented as having come from Gokul, the Cow-World! The modern cruelty to animals may well be rebuked by Krishna's reverence for the Cow and his profound philosophy that every animal is a centre of the Life of the Great Atman. Several stories in the Books speak of Krishna's

heroism. His heroism grew out of a Great Heart. Krishna the Hero was essentially Krishna the Lover. His Love was given to all Humanity. Such is my faith. "When shall our Race be one great Brotherhood?"—asks a Hindu poet of the tenth century. An answer may be found in Gita—in Krishna's Flute. I look for the day when our 'nationalism' will be filled with this aspiration: "When shall our Race be one great Brotherhood?" As love of the family must fulfil itself by growing into love of the nation, so must 'nationalism' fulfil itself by growing into humanism. This note—the note universal—is sounded, again and again, in the Bhagavad-Gita. The world has but to know the Book better to recognise it as a Scripture of Humanity. I have called it a "Song of the Ages". Not without reason have some of the world's great thinkers and critics and sages paid their tributes to the Book and to him the Flute-Player whose Sacred Image is enshrined in its pages. Wilhelm Von Humboldt, an eminent German *savant*, wrote a dissertation on the Gita, and in a letter to a German friend said he was "thankful to God" that he had been allowed to live long enough



to be able to read such a "wonderful, philosophical work."

Krishna's Flute has, I submit, a message for the Nations. At this hour when bureaucracy has hurled against the Nation a policy of force, when some of the noblest of India's sons are in chains, when hundreds of students are pressing forward to the prison-house as to a place of pilgrimage,—at this hour I fain would ask young men to find strength in the message of the Master's Flute. Many of us who are grown up have, alas! fallen from the Faith, but not I believe, the Young. And them the Flute calls at this hour to be loyal to the Law of Love. The sword of the sircar will be rust, but not the Master's Flute. The policy of the bureaucracy will fail but *not* the music of the Master's Flute. Confronted with mighty hosts on the battlefield, the Lord sang the Sacred Song and Arjuna accepting it won. Confronted with the growing storm, will Young India listen to the Master's Flute and fight for India's freedom in the name of Humanity? Or will Young India, in a thoughtless mood, listen to counsels of fire and tumult?

One thing I feel sure of; the message of the

Flute is the world's piteous need to-day. For hate and passion have wrecked the life of the Nations. The dominating civilization has, at its heart, pride and love of power. Imperialism holds the East in its grip. In India, in Egypt, in Africa, in Asia Minor, in Mesopotamia, in the Muslim East, an aggressive civilization is at work to serve mammon and strangle God. The East is in agony and cries out for a deliverer. Europe has sold its soul to a Satan in civilization and cries out for a Saviour. The world's need is urgent. I recall the words of an Eastern Singer: "Pray that the King may come." That prayer has been my aspiration for several years past I live in expectation. I believe in the coming again of an *avatara*. In some calm moments of meditations methinks I see him coming again in the garb of a poor, simple peasant, "pray, that the King may come again." And when He comes again, will the Nation know him? Not until there be groups of awakened souls in different parts. Therefore I plead for a new study of Krishna's Teaching. Therefore I plead for organization of Bands of Youngmen pledged to simple life and self-renouncing love.

For these two *awaken* the soul,—*knowledge and suffering*. These two discipline the soul in the school of self-renunciation. In one of the "New Sayings,"—recently discovered, of Jesus we read: "His disciples said unto him: 'When will thou be manifest to us and when shall we see thee'?" And He said: "When he shall be stripped and not be ashamed." Are young men ready to be "stripped and not be ashamed"? Ready to become *fakirs* for India's sake, for Humanity's sake? Ready to be poor, forsaken, persecuted for Shri Krishna's sake? Then, indeed, may the Master come again. And when Krishna comes again, there will be the world's new youth and spring.

T. L. VASWANI

Karachi, 20th Dec. 1921

# KRISHNA'S FLUTE

## THE QUEST OF THE FLUTE

**T**HE genius of Krishna ! A Thinker ? Yes.  
A Statesman ? Yes. But I have loved to  
meditate upon him as a Singer. How happy  
he made Aryavarta with that Flute upon his  
lips ! Brindaban became the very Land of  
Youth, Krishna carried music in his heart ;  
and as a Chinese sage has said : "Where there  
is music, there is joy."

Music has its mystical side. Music geome-  
tricises. Hindu singers of an earlier generation  
would often close their eyes before attempting  
to sing. They would see the picture of the *raga*  
they said. Each *raga*—according to the Hindu  
theory—has its picture. Music produces its  
pictures and—its colours, too ! With what  
forms, what lovely pictures did Krishna fill  
Brindaban, as he played upon the Flute ?

The harmonium is debasing our music. The Flute is a simple instrument, but how expressive ! The Arab flute-player is still impressive. And in ancient books we read many stories of the wonderful influence of the Flute. The Hebrew used the flute sometimes in temple-service and often in religious processions. The Peruvians used it in festivals and triumphs. The Greeks were a musical people, and I wonder why the Flute did not become their favourite instrument. According to a Greek story, Athene who brought with her the flute soon cast it aside ! But if She cast it aside in Greece, Krishna took it up in India ! It must have been a simple instrument,—the Flute of Krishna ! Made not of ivory or bone,—as are several flutes of the modern day—but of reed. And out of this simple instrument made of reed, Krishna drew a wonderful music.

For this Krishna the Singer was also Krishna the Seeker. He sought the *hearts* of his hearers as with his feet bare and his right hand upon the Flute he sounded note after note of melody. They who read the Books say that milkmaids and shepherds sought him,—the Flute-Player. If they will read the Books

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more closely they will know he also sought them. Man seeks God. But there is a deeper truth still. God seeks man. The quest of Krishna's Flute has been for human hearts. The God of music, it has been said, dwelleth out of doors. Krishna the musician has not wished to dwell "out of doors"; He has wished to enter human hearts. So we read in the Books that when he played upon the Flute in Brindaban, the gopis *forgot themselves*. When he enters into your heart, you forget yourself! And again and again has he entered the hearts opened out to receive him. An English lady in a moving letter to me acknowledged Krishna; and I said to myself:—Krishna's Flute has found her heart! And I recalled names of Krishna's devotees in the past. Sayyad Ibrahim was a Muslim of the seventeenth century; he became a Krishna devotee. Taj was a Muslim lady; she became Krishna's disciple in the seventeenth century, and wrote some beautiful verses in praise of the Master. Aristotle says somewhere that the Flute-sounds arouse passion. There is something deeper than 'passion'; it is love, self-surrender. This love is what Krishna's Flute seeks. God

wants to be born anew in our hearts. The Flute is a call to us to cleanse our hearts for the Lord's re-birth. Radha of whom so many stories are told in the scriptures, represents the Heart. It is true the heart seeks Him. It is yet more deeply true He seeks the Heart. Krishna wandered through the woods,—according to an ancient story,—in quest of Radha. For Radha had left the *rasa* dance. And Krishna roamed hither and thither to seek her out. Krishna is in quest of the human heart. And there is no *mukṭi*, no freedom until the heart has responded to his Flute and surrendered itself in love at his lotus-feet; *mukṭi* is not for him who has the *pride* of learning. Scholarship without *bhakti* is like the X-ray apparatus when in action. To use the apparatus without a protective box is to be exposed to serious dangers. *Mukṭi* is for him who would be as a child and receive in his heart the Master. In North America among Indian tribes the Flute is called "lover's Flute". It is the lover's Flute the Master plays upon. He seeks our hearts. To give him the heart is to realise the *meaning* of religion,—is to be patient with much evil as only a folly of the

## THE QUEST OF THE FLUTE 17

ignorant,—is to be rid of heavy egoisms and rejoice in self-renunciation.

The whole philosophy of the *Gita* and the *Bhagvad Puran* is this: *Live love*. It is the message of Shri Krishna. Young men need the message. India has suffered much, they, say. India needs a new State, they say. But a new State, let me say, cannot be built without new *hearts*. Politics are with some alas! a game of ambition rather than a sphere of nation-service. Let every town and village have at least a group of twelve men with hearts full of love for India; and India will achieve Her freedom. For behind the Struggle of to-day stands the Lord; and he will give victory,—as he gave it to Arjuna on the Kuru-field,—to those who will offer him not paper-schemes and Conference resolutions but their *hearts*. I believe that He is the one Actor. He acts through us, in the measure we give him what he seeks, our hearts. What *karma*, asked a *gopi* in the long ago, “what good *karma* did the Flute do to drink in the nectar flowing from Krishna’s lips?” The answer to the question is obvious. The Flute *emptied itself*, and through it Krishna breathed his music into



Aryavarta. The Master is not dead. And he fain would breathe his music into the life of India, to-day. But we must empty ourselves. Then India walking the way of self-renunciation will by him be blessed. Then through India will he sing again for India's liberation and the healing of the Nations.

## RADHA THE REVOLUTIONIST

IN the *Bavishya Puran* we read of "the eternal Radha-Krishna" as a "single figure" and separating into Radha and Krishna "after a thousand *yugas* of *tapas*". "They separately performed *tapas* for a thousand *yugas* and a light proceeded from the bodies of both. From that light originated the divine Brindaban". It is a beautiful way of representing the idea of the soul's eternal union with the Lord. That mystic union is sundered when the soul is embodied on the earth-plane. Krishna's Flute is a Call for Re-union. And every heart must become a *Radha*, a *woman-soul* to be re-united with Krishna. The woman-soul has longing, has *bhakti*. In the Scriptures we read that Radha and Krishna met at Jamuna. Every heart must become a Jamuna, a stream

flowing with love. I sometimes think Radha had in her the spirit of a revolutionist : she did not believe in customs and conventions : She was a non-conformist ; she did not care what the world thought of her. "For Krishna's sake," she said, "I forsook without shame the path of duty." Not unoften what men call 'duty' is only 'convention,' *maya* ! The Revolutionist rises above *maya*, above convention. It is the *woman-soul* that will achieve India's revolution.

To rise from *maya* to mystic union with the Lord, is not a matter of 'reform'. The man must become *new*. He must be *re-born* ; Woman-soul must be born in him. What the Scriptures call 'rebirth', I call 'revolution'. In this rise from *maya* to mystic re-union, there are definite stages ; and these are indicated by several stories and sayings associated in the Books with Radha. These, too, are the stages which, I believe, the Nation must pass through if it would achieve a Regenerative Revolution. The first is the stage of *awakening*. *Viveka* is the word used in the Scriptures. Radha quickly rises to an *awakening* of her situation when she has been separated from Krishna. The

Lord is gone to Mathura ; and she asks herself, again and again : “ Why has he left me ? ” “ Why has he forsaken my companionship ? ” Awakening must come to us before we may hope to grow in the God-life. Awakening must come to the People before we may hope that India will be free. Do what you will, you cannot eliminate a period of *preparation*, of *discipline*, of *sadhan*. India is a Land of Villages; and the majority of villages have not yet awakened to the Gospel of freedom. A Nation may have its *swaraj*, no more than an individual his spiritual freedom, without passing through a period of *awakening*. It is necessary to learn the discipline of patience. What we must do at this hour is, as it seems to me, to spread the message to the villages. Awaken the villages. There are no short-cuts to a Nation's freedom.

Awakening must be followed by what is called *vyakulata* in the Scriptures. May I call it ‘*anguish*’ of the soul? How many of us who talk of Freedom have *anguish* in our hearts at the present state of India? A mediæval poet represents Radha as saying to a friend : “ How can I tell the limits of my grief, my dear?

Again : "Woe is me, dear sister, for my present state ! My heart burns day and night ; I know no peace. O that I could fly where Krishna is to be found !" What is 'patriotism' worth which has not *pain* at its heart ? I know young men who hate Englishmen ; they forget that patriotism is love-emotion. I know youngmen who speak boastfully of the *rishis* of the past. They forget that patriotism should make us humble. We say we are proud of the *rishis*. Are the *rishis* proud of us ? I know youngmen who have taken to national politics as a 'profession' which brings with it the crowd's applause. They forget that a patriot carries pain in his heart ; for India is in bondage.

The third stage is : *Sacrifice*. Radha took *vrata*, the Scriptures say, to regain Krishna. Radha did *tapasya*. The great Bengalee poet Vidyapati puts into Radha's mouth the following significant words :

"If the Lord comes back to Gokul, I shall offer my necklace of pearls for festal knots. In his service I achieve my all."

What matters if you and I are spent,—are shattered,—in the Struggle if the end of it be a Festival of Freedom for India ? And what

purser prayer may we breathe at this anxious hour in our history than to say with the love and longing Radha carried in her heart : " *In Thy Service, Mother ! we achieve our all ?* "

## PLANTING THE PEARL

M. EMIL COVE is the founder of a School of Applied Psychology at Nancy. In a recent lecture in London he indicated how much a man could achieve by conscious auto-suggestion. One could, he urged, heal oneself—heal one's physical suffering by closing one's eyes, passing hands over the seat of pain and repeating the words:—"It's going"! History is full of the miracles of "I will". Is it impossible to believe in the miracles of "I love"? Of this character are most of the 'miracles' associated with Shri Krishna in the scriptures. Krishna the Singer appears, again and again, as Krishna the Wonder-worker. And his wonders reveal love. He shows a world-vision to his mother; he loves her. On the battle-field he reveals himself to Arjuna; he

loves him, and the vision gives strength to uphold the Right. To the poor fruit-seller he gives some grains of rice changing every grain into gold; Krishna is a lover of the poor. Kujja the deformed is made by him straight and beautiful. Story after story told of him in the Books has behind it, as I understand it, the thought of the infinite compassion and tender love of the Master. His 'miracles' are not, as far as I can see, expressions of mere power. His 'miracles' have a moral quality. They reveal his human love.

One such story in an English garb appeared some years ago. The author of that dramatic piece is Mr. R. C. Trevelyan. It is named "*The Pearl Tree*." Its scene is laid in Gokul and Brindaban. Its idea is beautiful; I wished the atmosphere of the story were Indian in every scene. Thus Krishna's mother Yashoda is represented as "standing at the entrance of her house" "with a stick in her hand"! Mr. Trevelyan refers to Krishna's Flute; but its notes, as represented by the author, are no more than "clear and gay". Again, the 'boys' are represented as making a



"rush for the door, trying to force their way past Yashoda into her house"! They are represented, too, as saying that they must take Krishna away "whether his mother may wish it or no"! Again, there are references to the Rishis which do not fit in with the Indian sentiment. Krishna is represented as saying of a Rishi :—"Vishnu preserve me from such torpid saintliness!" Again, speaking to a Rishi in the play, Krishna is represented as speaking to him the following strange words :

"Old man, now mind : not a word to them  
[of me !

Not a nod ! Keep still and mum as a root !"

There are several passages, however, which reproduce a genuine Indian atmosphere and give a beautiful picture of the Master. Krishna's love of sport and the cows and the blue skies is indicated in the very opening scene. There is a passage, too, which gives us a hint of Yashoda's vision of the 'Divine' in her Child. Speaking to some boys who came to take Krishna with them for play, she says :

"I sometimes think so different he seems  
From all else that a God's soul in its  
dreams

Oft enters him and lodges there awhile."

The central thought of the Play is brought out in the way Krishna works a miracle of his love to save Radha. He loves her. She has become proud. The moon is shining. He is in the forest of Brindaban. He sings to himself a song which represents Radha as regarding her "loveliness" "more lovely" than the moon and calling "Krishna, the Playmate" to come to her. But she is not by him. She has left him. She is in Gokul. Krishna sends Sudama to her with a message. Krishna has need, he says, of one small pearl, one only, from her ears or neck. "This pearl, if she will grant it," Krishna "will sow" and "from it raise" a thousand pearls "to deck with pearls the dewlaps" of the Cows Krishna loves! Krishna also says in his message to Radha that the pearl she may give will be returned to her with many other pearls! Krishna wants Radha to send him one of her pearls to grow a pearl-tree! Sudama carries Krishna's message to Radha. Radha is proud. She speaks with scorn of Krishna. Krishna's name, she says, is hateful to her. Krishna, she says, is "an ignorant, stupid,

unreasoning cowherd"! Not even the most lavish *rajah*, she says, could "conceive so crazed a fancy" as this of adorning "cows with necklaces of pearl"; and pearls, she adds, are not "things easy and cheap to win" like flowers! Radha refuses to give a pearl of her own. Sudama reports to Krishna everything on his return. How sad Krishna feels! The Master's Flute is in quest of the pearl of the human heart! and when the heart refuses to respond to his love, how sad he feels! Not without reason is Jesus called in Christian Scriptures "the man of sorrows". There is sorrow in the heart of the Eternal; for things are not as they should be; and the Lord's continual Joy, *ananda* is in daily sacrifice offered by Himself at the altar of the Universe: Nature and man could not grow in beauty and strength without that Sacrifice. Krishna is sad. Krishna is ill. His mother asks him what he wants. "A small thing, mother," he says: "just one small pearl from your neck-chain." And he says to her he will return to her pearl and new ones too! What says Yashoda?

"Is that all?—There!—Take which you will—

Since pining for it has made you ill.

Though I don't quite see why that should be!"

And Krishna makes a hole in the soil and in the hole plants the pearl as seed! Krishna"! "Krishna"! says his mother to him, "what have you done? Have you buried my pearl? So you meant to make fun of your poor old mother?" Krishna hears but smiles! So he smiled when Arjuna on the battlefield felt embarrassed in the presence of his kinsmen. How can I kill my kinsmen? asked Arjuna. Krishna smiled! When we are in depths of sorrow, Krishna smiles! The Master *knows* that suffering is passing, that in and through loss and sorrow, life is enriched. The Master smiles at the *maya* which confounds us. He raises us from our *maya* by *his* Maya. The Master's Maya is a *Shakti* of love, a 'miracle' of mercy. When Yashoda feels confounded, irritated, Krishna smiles! And he overcomes her *maya* by exhibiting a little of his Maya to her. He plays upon his Flute, The pearl obeys him! The vibrations of the Master's music reach the pearl! Like seed, it strikes a root. Krishna continues to play upon the Flute. More and more vibrations

reach the pearl. It breaks. The pearl-tree is born! The Flute sends note after note of melody. The pearl-tree grows! It swells! It is alive with innumerable pearls! "There, mother!", Krishna says, "there is your pearl back again!" And he gives her yet more pearls for her ear and to make a new chain! And he gives many to the boys to make garlands of them for their cows. What of Radha? A friend who has seen the pearl-tree grow, goes to Gokul to tell Radha of the wonder of the Lord. She tells Radha, too, to be wise and seek the pardon which Krishna "waits for but one word freely to give". But Radha is still proud. "His pardon! Never!" she says to her friend. Radha is proud yet anxious to see the pearl-tree herself. She comes to Brindaban. She does not see the tree. Has it vanished? A Rishi sits under a *peepul* tree. "I see nothing," she says to him. And the Rishi's reply is significant. He says to her: "The proud in heart see nought. Pride blinds their eyes." It is the humble who enter the Kingdom of Knowledge. Now is Radha's heart changed. She tells the Rishi that she has abandoned pride and seeks Krishna. "I

desire," she says to the Rishi, "I seek ; and finding not must perish. Oh ! tell me how am I to find him." Repentance grows in her and the longing to see the Lord whom she had scorned. It is night. She is alone. In bitter anguish of the soul, Radha cries :

"Within me is night.

Yonder stars mock me.

In my heart shines

No star no moon,

No hope of light

'Twas I who scorned him, I who killed

That light whereby

My life he filled."

And the Master's light shines for the meek. Humility is the light in which we are to walk to meet the Master one day. And Radha no longer proud but humble, Radha sees the pearl-tree. "Nothing but light I see"; she says ; "the light of pearls". And following the light she finds Krishna in the forest ! Plunged in her *maya* she had spurned the Lord. Krishna set up the *Maya* of the pearl-tree and lured her to find him in the Forest ! That's Love's plan of salvation ! Radha lies prostrate at Krishna's feet. He raises her up. "Nay, keep thy pearls"

he says to her. "I need none. For Love's pearl once more is mine." The Master needs nothing. Yet he needs the pearl of human heart. He needs us for Love's sake. He would have us be co-workers with him for the multiplying of Love's centres. And the way to be co-workers with him is to break the fetters which passion and pride have forged. In Humility and love let us surrender ourselves to Him. And He will work through us new wonders for India's Emancipation.

## IN THE FOREST

THERE are critics who resolve Shri Krishna's personality into a 'vegetative deity'! To them the Master is only a personification of nature's renewal in spring! The critics simply set aside the testimony of Tradition and Hindu religious experience through the ages. The theory of the critics is due to an over-emphasis of a *real* aspect of Shri Krishna's life. Nature is an important factor in the Master's life. Krishna loves Nature and those who love her. Hence his love of the cowherds and the cow. He himself is often called in the Scripture, *Gopala*, Protector of the Cows, the Cowherd. And several of his acts are associated with the Forest. As a youth he plays upon the Flute and calls his comrades to the Forest. In the Forest of Brindaban Radha meets him again



and again. To the Forest he retires as Jesus retired to the Mountain from time to time to meditate, to perform *yoga*. In the Forest he meets the Pandavas when they are in exile with Draupadi. In the Forest he develops his plan of saving India on the Kuru-field. In the Forest he passes away.

This last act of Krishna's *leela* in the Forest is a most moving one. A plague spreads in Dwarka. The people are miserable. Krishna loves them. Krishna tells them the disease will disappear if they repair to the river bank, sing God's name and give up the habit of drink. They promise to do so. For some time Dwarka is the very picture of joy. The people sing the Lord's name and are happy. The disease disappears. Then they forget their pledges to Krishna. They take to drink again. Confusion falls upon them. Dwarka is smitten with strife. Fathers slay their sons, sons their fathers. Krishna's son is killed by the mob. The tumult continues. The people are still in the wild mood. Krishna's soul is sorrowful. Krishna goes to the Forest! He sits under a tree. He has the garments of a simple cowherd. He is practising *yoga* in the *swastha* attitude, the attitude in which

Buddha is often represented in sculpture. A huntsman Jara enters the Forest. He mistakes Krishna's foot for a deer. He shoots an arrow at the Master's foot. The master is mingled with the Universal. It is a moving story. It has not appealed to some of Krishna's critics. One of them,—Rev. Tisdall—in a book "*Christ and Other Masters*" finds fault with that part of the story which says that Krishna took the hunter up to heaven in a chariot. "Instead," says Rev. Tisdall, "of punishing him, (the master) Krishna shot him up to the sky in a celestial chariot"! What a misunderstanding of the master's love! And the criticism comes from a Christian missionary who should have remembered a similar incident in the life of Jesus. Jesus is on the Cross; by his side is a thief; and to this thief Jesus says: "This day wilt thou be with me in Paradise." But the hunter, it will be said, pierced with an arrow Shri Krishna's foot and the thief believed in Jesus. What is there, I ask, to make you think that the hunter did *not* believe in Krishna? The hunter, the story clearly says, mistook Krishna for a deer. The mistake was not unnatural with regard to the master who

profoundly loved the animal world. What is there to make one think that the hunter on realising what he had done did not repent, did not in his deep anguish pray to Krishna for pardon? Did not that repentance, that prayer become a good *karma* of the hunter? And is there a prayer rising out of an anguished heart which cannot reach the lotus-feet of the Lord? It is said of Jesus that he said to the woman at the well: "Give me to drink." He *requested* a Samaritan—a *sudra*, as we would say in this country, to give him water. Instead of saying, "You have need of me," he, as it were, said to a *sudra*: "I have need of you." That is love. Love seeks the sinner. Love enters the depths of sorrow. Jesus went into the Hades,—we read in the Christian scriptures. Krishna, we read, went into *Patal* after the hunter's arrow had pierced him. The Master's compassion seeks souls in the depths of degradation. Could he be indifferent to the hunter's anguished heart? Krishna entered I believe, into the depths of Jara's sorrow; and he into whose heart the Master enters, he is blessed with gifts richer than the *swargaloka*.

Jara the huntsman shot Shri Krishna with an

arrow ; in so doing he shot a picture of the Master on the photographic plate of the universe. It is a picture on which I have loved to meditate, again and again. Krishna sitting in the *tapoban*, the Forest of Penance ; Krishna pierced with an arrow ; Krishna blessing the hunter ! That picture is a symbol, to my mind, of God's sacrifice for the Universe. Krishna in his *tapasya*, in his anguish blesses the Nations. The ancient artist saw the meaning of the Krishna-life when he gave the model for the Image of Krishna in the Temple of Jagannath. The Image has its arms uplifted to form the Buddhist *trisu*, the Aryan Cross. Of the many *rupas* of the Lord, one is this *rupa* of Krishna on the Cross ! Krishna's *tapasya*, Krishna's agony in the *tapoban*,—that is what I would have Young India meditate upon at this hour of the Nation's struggle, And to meditate is to assimilate. Will the young men who long for the day of India's Liberation practise *tapasya* and share with the master his Great Agony ? For the Call of the Flute is also, the Call of the Cross. The conflict between Freedom and Power will I believe, become keen in the coming days. Shall we

compromise with the world and submit to Strength ? Or shall we stand by Krishna's side doing *tapasya*, suffering physical pain for the sake of Freedom ? India's fate has been the fate of Beauty all the world over ; India has suffered much. And it may be the will of God that she yet must suffer and practise yet more *tapasya*. One thing I have learnt at the Master's feet—in *tapasya* is strength ; and to a nation that knocks with love and agony in its heart are opened the Gates of Liberty.

## SONG OF THE AGES

MANY are the stories told in the Scriptures of the Master's Song. When he played upon the Flute, milk-maids suspended their works to listen to the Song. And cowherds and boys came in numbers to listen to the Song. And girls left their homes to follow the Flute-Player and his song. And trees trembled and flowers bloomed and rivers swelled and peacocks rejoiced to listen to the Song. Between two armies, the Master planted his chariot when he stood by Arjuna as his Councilor; and he sang his Song. Its message is enshrined in the Gita. Has the message a value for modern India and the modern age?

Repression and rough 'politics' fill the air. *putting down*  
If one could but listen to the song! In the *desires of*  
agony of today, a new patriotism is being

born. If we could but see the Master with the Flute in his hands, riding the Storm today ! The Nation is almost maddened at the bureaucratic policy. The Nation needs the Ancient message as, perhaps, never before in its history. To give that message to the Nations, India lives. We wandered in the day we trampled upon the Spiritual Wisdom of our Seers. The long period of our subjection has been, I believe, a period of our expiation. The period I hope, is about to be over. Shall we wander again ? Shall we trample once more upon the truth which is India, the truth of *Atma-samarpan*, the supremacy of the Spiritual ? This truth is the message of the Gita.

It is a philosophy of synthesis, the Gita gives us. With German thinkers, philosophy was *wissenschaft*, a *theory* of life. In the Gita philosophy is not merely a theory ; it has a life-meaning. It is a vision of Life we have in the Gita. A *vision*, not an 'art of life' such as Greek sophists and Epicurus talked of. A vision, and therefore something richer than a 'critique' which is all that Kant attempted to give. The message of the Gita is a beautiful synthesis of *action*, *knowledge* and *love*—*karma*,

*gnan*, and *bhakti*. The three are not to be separated one from the other. Karma marga, gnan marga, bhakti marga—are not three separate paths but *three stages in the one path—one ascent of the soul to God*. Karma, gnan and bhakti—we need *all the three* to have a philosophy of life. For true philosophy is, as the Hindu Books tell us, a *darshan*, a *vision*. The Gita is a Song of this Vision of Life. And to him who has glimpsed even a little of the beauty of this Vision, the Spiritual is the supreme Reality. As Arjuna says in the Gita :

I see Thy face that glows as Sacred Fire  
And with its radiance keeps alive the world,  
And all heavenly regions and the space  
Twixt earth and heavens are filled by  
Thee alone.

In a similar strain sang the mediæval mystic of the Punjab, Guru Nanak. "Behold !" he said : "the wide heaven is a sacred vessel ! The sun and the moon are lighted as a lamp for Thy holy vespers, and the stars in their sphere make consecrated circle of pearls. Breezes of the south are there to fan Thy altar; the Winds are there to burn incense and flowers of the Forest drop as offerings at Thy



feet. Such be Thy evening worship, Oh ! Redeemer of the Race, Such be Thy worship!" Yes—to the man of vision the world is more than a 'wonder'; it is a *worship*. Europe studies nature with admirable industry and care. Europe has yet to learn to see Nature as a Temple of Worship. Thomas Hardy is an eminent man of letters. Anglo-Indians were annoyed with the Swedish Academy when it chose Tagore for the Noble Prize, passing over Thomas Hardy ! But what is the summing up of Hardy's philosophy ? Man is great but the Universe is mean ! Tagore's philosophy is charged with a vision of India's sages. The universe is *not* mean ; it is the *leela* of the Lord ; it is a Play of Shri Krishna ! The 'conflict' between man and nature has a meaning for the man of *gnan and bhakti and karma*. This conflict, this *maya* gives colour to life, disciplines it, enriches it. The very "Song of the Lord" was given on a Battle-field. The Kurukshetra supplied the environment of the Gita. In the thick of the conflict did the master take the Car and deliver the message to bewildered Arjun. Over the Storm rode the Flute-Player.

This *vision* gives strength for action. Arjun could not act until Shri Krishna unfolded to him a *World-vision*. It is a wonderful chapter—the 11th *adhyaya* of the Gita. A whole volume may well be devoted to its interpretation. There are but few passages in world-literature I know of which may be compared to this section,—the Eleventh *Adhyaya* of the Gita. This chapter describes in wonderful verse the vision which Shri Krishna grants to Arjun. And then? Then Arjun's *weakness* vanishes and he gets the strength to stand up and fight. For what Arjuna called his 'compassion' was really his *weakness*. He regarded it, later, as 'paltry; faint-heartedness.' This weakness vanished after his vision of the *Spiritual*. Does not Arjuna represent the average Indian of to-day? How often have I not met young men having good sentiments like Arjuna, but Arjun-like weak, vacillating, tossed to and fro by thoughts and feelings, yet not potent enough, not vital enough for *action*! India has suffered for centuries from weak sentimentalism; we need to build up a *robust* nationhood. We cannot do it without a vision of the Ideal. For life's strength

grows out of vision. To glimpse the Vision is to know how everyday's work may become a *dharma*. For *dharma* is unity, is harmony, is *synthesis*. It is business ; it is study ; it is politics ; it is art ; it is worship. It all depends upon the *inner spirit* of our activities, upon the vision we pour upon them. *Dharmapalana* through *atmasamarpana*, the doing of *dharma* through self-surrender to the Ideal—this, expressed in one line, is to my mind the fundamental message of the Gita. It is a message the world needs piteously today. The Gita I have called the "Song of the Ages." Who will sing it anew to the Nations if not India ? Therefore I ask young men to meditate upon the master, to study the Gita, to assimilate its teaching, to re-awaken India's villages with the message of Shri Krishna. It is a message which says "Stand up ! Parantapa ! Be strong ! Do thy *Dharma* ! Offer thy action as a sacrifice to the Living Ideal." Let the message become a force in our lives and we shall stand by India through all the difficult days before us. We shall stand by the Mother, each one a soldier at his post, each one a standard-bearer of *dharma*. And with

Krishna as our Captain we shall win ; we shall  
break India's bonds. And a free India will  
give the Master's message to the modern  
world.

## THE MAYA OF 'MODERNISM'

"They who come to Me, they cross over the Maya."  
(Gita VII, 14.)

YEARS ago I went to Europe as a pilgrim to a shrine. I returned to India with a richer appreciation of Indian culture, a deeper love for the Ideal India has worshipped through the ages. Europe, to-day, presents the spectacle of what Bernard Shaw in a beautiful drama has characterised as the "Heart—break House". There is a break-down in the civilization of Europe. Why? Europe, it seems to me, has suffered from a triple *maya*,—*nationalism*, *mechanism* and *efficiency*. The *maya* of nationalism in politics, the *maya* of mechanism in science, the *maya* of 'efficiency' in life—this, to my mind, is the threefold malady of modern Europe. And the Soul of India can, I believe, be of service to Europe,—can enable

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her to get rid of the triple *maya* and enrich the life of humanity.

Let me relate two little stories to indicate the difference between the standpoint of India and that of modern Europe. Here is a story as told by an English lover of art. He was in a hotel ; he felt he was not being served well ; he spoke to the waiter of his "standing in the musical world" ; he was not served better ; then he said he had "interests in oil," and the waiter suddenly showed anxiety to serve him ! His "interests in oil" appealed to the waiter more than his "standing in the musical world". It is the *material values* which dominate the life of Europe.

Now let me relate another story. He was poorly clad ; he was not a man of influence or authority ; he was a *sadhu* ; and as he went from place to place, men and women, wealthy *sethias* and wealthy women came out to have his *darshan* and, if possible, to touch his feet ! They wanted the blessings of this man ; and a little flower he occasionally gave was valued as a precious gift ; the flower was a symbol of his *blessing*. It is *immaterial values* which still move the lives of India's millions.

It is the 'politician,' the man of money, the man of power whom the West appreciates. It is the *sadhu*, the man of poverty, the man of self-control, *ahinsa*, the man of renunciation India adores. India's moving spirit is: *santi*. That of Europe has been: *conflict of passions*. Much in the nationalisms of Europe grows out of this *conflict*. The great idea of freedom has degenerated, again and again, into passion for power. And out of this passion are the issues of repression, coercion, war. The world-war was a product of Europe's conflicting nationalisms, each anxious to be a world-power. What a waste of human life is war! Europe's nationalisms. Europe's cults of power, have plunged millions into suffering. Recall the terrible famine in Russia! Think of the Central Powers of Germany and Austria! What did they not suffer on account of the blockade by the Allies? Think of Poland; about 20 millions of the Polish children are short of food! Think of Serbia! Three out of every 4 children are tuberculous,—for lack of food. Think of the devastation in the East, due to imperialistic ambitions of the 'Big Powers' of Europe! Think of Britain's conduct towards

Egypt and India ! Britain refuses to recognise the *spiritual* right of these Peoples to govern themselves. Britain's own 'greatness' as an Empire, would suffer,—so Britain thinks,—if these nations became free. And Britain would not recognise a Right above its own *national* or *imperial* interests. Racism is often an expression of exaggerated 'nationalism'. We see its evil effects in Africa and America. A small colony of European settlers in Kenya wants to dominate the African and Indian inhabitants of that country. In America the struggle between the coloured and white peoples continues. Several negroes have their banks and insurance societies, their newspapers and universities ; and they have produced leaders like Dr. Du Bois and Washington. But lynching has not yet been abolished in the United States. A Boston Journal writes :

"Within the last decade we have seen a negro boy stabbed in numberless places while on his way to the stake, we have seen the eyes of a negro man burnt out with hot irons and pieces of flesh cut off, and a Negro woman whose only offence was a word of protest against the lynching of her husband subjected



to unspeakable indignity and torture." The great enemy of modern life is the God of Riches ; and Bryce in his great book on ' Democracy ' admits that modern democracies are unable to cope with plutocratic influences. Against these evils of Europe's political life, its mammon-worship, its power-cult, its nationalism, its racialism,—India's Immaterialism is a mighty protest. The Soul of India questions the whole philosophy of nationalism. It bears witness to a ' Beyond the Nations '—to a vision of Humanity, to a Law above the laws of states—the Law of Dharma which alone can correct the aberrations of nationalism and adjust the conflicting claims of different Peoples. " They who come to Me must cross over the *maya* ". Nations must not ignore moral obligations ; to ignore them is to make freedom unsafe. Such the teaching of India. Europe's nationalisms need to be corrected by Humanism,—by a vision of Humanity which India has borne witness to, again and again, through the ages.

In the realm of *knowledge*, Europe has studied much which has proved of interest and advantage to the world. Europe has thought,

has explored, has invented, But its 'science' has remained separated from what India called "Brahmavidya". The "science" of the West has studied matter and forms,—characters of, and changes in, physical structures; but the Movement of Life and what is beyond life,—the *Ātman*,—have escaped it. Is it a wonder 'science' has been used, again, for *selfish* purposes? It was men of science who invented poison gas to make the war more deadly in its effects. And Sir Edward Thorpe recently condemned this abuse of science. "An educated public opinion," he said, "will refuse to give credit to any body of scientific men who employ their talents in devising means to develop and perpetuate a mode of warfare which is abhorrent to the higher instincts of humanity." It is good he condemned the use of poison gas; but are not other modes of warfare, also, abhorrent "to the higher instincts of humanity"? 'Science' in Europe has been yoked to the service of the war-god. And Europe will not give up its sordid dreams of violence and war and its machine-civilization until Europe has more men in the scientific world who recognise the

*moral* obligations of science and realise the truth of India's Wise Ones that there is but One Life and that we must not harm it.

When *ahimsa*-consciousness has grown, Europe will understand that 'efficiency' is not the highest ideal. A nation is 'efficient' when it can kill quickly or exploit others successfully ! It is the 'morality' of the brigand and the robber. The Indian ideal is not 'efficiency' but *sacrifice*. The world is nourished by *sacrifice*: such the teaching given, over and over again, by Shri Krishna in the Gita. Much of what Europe calls 'progress' is worship of comfort, success, efficiency ; such progress is not *moral* development ; it may mean moral degeneration. Mere 'efficiency' never helped humanity. For it is nothing better than the will-to-power ; its god is no greater than wealth or material success. Such 'efficiency' is waste ; it impoverishes the only real life, the life of the soul. The law of higher life is *yagna*, sacrifice, renunciation ; such the teaching of Shri Krishna.

Europe has suffered much from this triple *maya*—*materialism*, *mechanism* and *efficiency*. The Indian Ideal calls her to rise above the

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*maya* and see things with the eye of *Atman*, *sub specie æternitatis*. To see with the eye of *Atman* is to know that above the Nations is Humanity, that behind mechanism is Life, that greater than 'efficiency' is Sacrifice. Will this insight come to Europe to-day? She has suffered much; the War has drained her of much of her life-blood; she lies bleeding upon the road-side. Will suffering give her the insight she needs? And will India's sufferings, the sufferings of a Nation for centuries enslaved, give *her*, too, an insight into herself, a knowledge of the Ideal worshipped by the Great Ones born on her soil? Will India refuse to surrender herself to the *maya* of Western Life? Then must we in this Struggle for Freedom get rid of narrow nationalism, of the 'patriotism' of passion and hate; then must we worship the one *Atman* in all Nations, nor reject in pride God's revelations to the West. Then must we learn to walk the way of *renunciation*. I sometimes think we are entering upon a downward curve; but the faith within me whispers:—It will yet be well with India. In that faith I wish to serve the National Movement. In that faith I fain

would proclaim India to the world. For the world's civilizations are becoming *vulgarisations*. Europe's nation-cults with their greed of power and gold are carrying hate and fear and strife into social and political relations. Europe is wardering into a world of *maya*. Who if not India can save her and the movement of Civilization? But India first must *know* herself and be *true* to herself through the tumults and passions of to-day.

## IDEALISM OR TRIBALISM ?

"Freed from passion, fear and anger, filled with Me, taking refuge in Me, purified in the fire of Wisdom (*Gnanatapas*,) many have entered into my being" (Gita, IV. 10.)

THERE is need of a *new spirit* in modern politics. Truth only can make us free ; and the truth is Humanity. To "take refuge" in Him, in the Spirit of Humanity is to be reverent of *man as man*. If the Indian Movement tramples upon this truth, it must disappoint many hopes. Fear is passing ; but passion and anger are growing. There are within the Movement, in some parts of the country, elements, forces, tendencies which I regard as anti-humanitarian. There has been intolerance of opinion ; there has been abuse and passion and hate. If such forces and tendencies grow, the very vital impulse of the Swaraj Movement will be checked. For the national

which is not a voice of Humanity becomes a force on the side of pride or strife or violence. Imperialism is swollen nationalism ; it is nationalism exploiting other peoples for its own materialistic ends. This ambitious nationalism brought Japan in conflict with the Koreans who claim to have enjoyed independence for four thousand years until their country was seized by Japan. It brought Russia into the world-war. It weakened Austria. It has with its cry of "Rule Brittania, Brittania rules the waves" made England aggressive in Ireland and the East. Nation-cults are cults of power and pride ; and they have often sown the seed of strife when what the sad world needs is—good-will. Not the heat of passion but the "fire of wisdom" (*gnanatapas*) will sustain our struggle to victory.

The test, to my mind, of the *vitality* of a national movement is not its membership, its funds, its organisation, but its progress towards the ideal of Humanity. Is our Movement moving *towards* or *away* from the Ideal ? The answer to the question will, perhaps, be different in different provinces. One thing I feel sure of. If the Swaraj Movement is to move

towards the Ideal, its *positive, constructive* character must be emphasised. Mere 'boycott,' negative commandments, cannot help India to be reborn to a new destiny. Boycott—is but one aspect of the movement. The other to my mind, the most important one, is : *building up*. Real swaraj, as I think of it, must be *built up by us*.

The *power to build* comes with a vision of the Ideal. Religion and Literature are two of the great interpreters of the Ideal. Hence the value of Culture to a National Movement. I use the word 'culture' in a special sense. I mean by it—*inner values* of life, *Gnanatapas*. In periods of need and trouble nations have been nourished by the *idealism* of men and women who have turned from materialistic ends to the *inner values* of life. Italy would not have been reborn but for the message of Mazzini. Germany was crushed after the battle of Jena. Then appeared Fichte and others of the Romantic Movement. They spoke of life's *inner values* to Young Germany and once again Germany revived. Soon Germany's *idealism* was overpowered by *industrialism* and *militarism* and a nation once great is fallen. She will, I



hope, rise again but not without the power of *idealism*. The true greatness of a nation is written not in blood and iron but in worship of some great Ideals.

Such idealism is a mark of the international spirit. And true nationalism, as I understand it, is in tune with the Ideal International. The 'nationalism' of hate and passion and strife and abuse I call *tribalism*. There is a *tribal tendency* in our Movement which we must check. *Idealism* will check it. It will develop that *broad-mindedness*, that sound political thinking without which *swaraj* cannot be built. It will show us right relations between national spirit and the Ideal International. The idealism I plead for means *independent thinking*; it means a return to the simplicity and beauty of life which modern forces have assailed; it means faith in India's genius and future; it means "taking refuge" in the Spirit of Humanity.

This Idealism must grow out of life; it must not be a thing *imagined*; it must receive its confirmation in history, in facts, in a critical estimate of India's strivings and achievements through the centuries. I hold that the more of

a patriot a man is, the more of an idealist. The bureaucracy is un-imaginative ; at its heart is belief in '*efficiency*' not *idealism*. Else would it respond to the People by abolishing itself. What more natural than the demand for national freedom ? Some months ago Senate President Queyon speaking in the Philippine Senate urged that the Philippines should have independence under the protection of the United States, and in the course of a patriotic speech made an observation which applies, also, to Indian conditions. "There is," he said, "no reason whatsoever why the Filipinos should be bound up with the United States. We can understand how Canada, Australia and New Zealand can live happily with England. The inhabitants of these colonies are united with the Mother Country by ties of blood, customs and a community of ideas. They have complete autonomy and they are satisfied. But we, the inhabitants of this country of ours, what do we have in common with the United States ? There is a great gulf dividing the American and Filipino races. Our customs, our traditions are different from theirs. Our union with America is the result

of the accident of War." The Indian nationalist may well ask : what do we have in common with the 'Empire' ? There is only one thing common,—humanity. And relations between India and England are not real unless they rest upon a *human* basis. Government has *not* built on this basis. Therefore is the present system doomed. What comes in conflict with the *human* cannot abide.

And we who say we want swaraj, we, as it seems to me, must build better, build on a basis of idealism ; else would our national work crumble. We can escape the Law no more than other nations. If we but thought of the Law, the *Dharma*, the Ideal, thought of building in obedience to that, swaraj would soon be ours. What prevents us even now from having swaraj in education, in sanitation, in medical relief, in settlement of disputes, in industry and social life ? What stands in the way of our having our own schools and courts and banks and co-operative organisations ? Ourselves. The power to build comes, as I said, with a vision of the Ideal. And not pouring that vision upon our institutions, we find that they are poor in results.

What the Ideal impregnates becomes fruitful, what grows out of opportunism soon decays. A National School was built in an official-ridden place. It attracted a large number of students. It won the sympathies of the people. But ambition entered the hearts of some responsible for its management. The ideal of nation-service vanished; the School perished. What lacks vision deserves to die. What a sad situation—this of India! We feel strangers in our fathers' soil; neither here nor abroad do we command respect; the masses are unable to resist poverty and, in many cases, starvation. We know that much of our physical suffering is due to the fact that the country's industries are strangled by Lancashire and Manchester. We understand that the economic salvation of the country is in swadeshi. Yet many of us are reluctant to give up foreign cloth! We talk of our 'discomforts' in giving up foreign luxuries! We have not yet learnt to worship the Ideal. They started, sometime ago, a Swadeshi Mandal. They talked of swadeshi and sold *swadeshi* cloth; but some of them spent public funds with a weak sense of responsibility. The Mandal was not nourished

by a vision of the Ideal. Our agitation has not proved very fruitful ! Why ? Many meetings, many Committees, many speeches, many activities ; but where there is no vision, there can be no fruitage of Freedom.

The vision I speak of is not a matter of scholarship or academic discussions. It may come to an unlettered man, a simple peasant, a little boy. Only he must "take refuge" in the Master. *Only the heart must remain untainted.* He was a rich man's son but his clothes were tattered ; and, sometimes, for days together he did not get two meals a day. He was young in years, but he had heard the Country's Call ; and in the service of Freedom he thought neither of father nor mother nor friends ; he had glimpsed a vision of the Ideal. The Korean struggle for freedom against Japanese militarism is full of incidents concerning the way in which boys and girls served their country. There is the story of a Korean boy of 13. A Japanese official presides at a school-function. The Korean boy is at the top in his class. He is asked to give the school-speech. He makes a fine speech. The Japanese official is pleased. But the boy

loves Korea. He knows that many who expressed their love for Korea were tortured by Japanese officials. But he must not be afraid. As he comes to the end of his speech, he says to the official : " We ask one thing more of you." He pulls out of his coat a Korean flag ! He raises it and says boldly :—" Give us back our country ! May Korea live for ever " ! And on hearing these words other boys, too, pull out their flags and say : " May Korea live for ever ! " That boy had " taken refuge " in the Lord. He had glimpsed a vision of the Ideal.

Shall *we* worship the Ideal ? Or shall we talk of vengeance and violence ? Shall we, while loving India, pay homage to Humanity ? Or shall we make our nationalism exclusive, aggressive ? Shall we walk in humility and love ? Or shall we drink the wine of passion and pride ? It is for Young India to answer. And if the answer be : " I worship Humanity," then, then, there is hope even in the night.

## A NATION'S YAGNA

"He who offereth to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water,—that I accept if given *with bhakti*." (Gita, IX 26.)

IN Christian churches in the West I spoke of Krishna and the Gita ; and they marvelled at the beauty and wisdom of this *avatara* of Love. In India young men immersed in the tumults of to-day are forgetting him and his Law. "We have no time," some tell me. Some others say : "O you make too much of him ! " Too much ! O ! that I had the power to speak less unworthily of the Message and *leela* of the Lord !

Let me apply the thought of the text to things bearing upon the strivings and struggle of to-day. An ancient text, but it has, I believe, a meaning for us all at this hour in our history. The one thing, indeed, which I have

felt again and again is that the Gita has a vital value for the modern age. Some may think I am too enthusiastic in my estimate. Krishna sang it, some will say, five thousand years ago. Krishna sings it, let me say, even to-day. The Ideal Life that was in him is not dead. Krishna is not dead. Nor has he, according to my belief, left India. The *rishis* and the gods have not left Her. He has not left Her. If I believe in the success of the Struggle for Freedom, it is because I believe He and the Rishis and the Gods are behind us in the Struggle. If only this consciousness were in us undimmed, we would be in the National Movement with clean hearts, with deep humility, with the faith which no power of the *sircar* can crush. And of Shri Krishna's Message, the text before us indicates an important aspect. You want *swaraj*, you say. Whatever a man wants he can achieve ;—such the teaching of the Scriptures. But on one condition. It is named *Sacrifice*. And many kinds of Sacrifice are mentioned in the Books. These I do not propose to indicate at present. What I would urge is that the power of achievement is *yagna, sacrifice*. In the Hindu code of life,

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sacrifice plays an important part. That code, I know, is not much honoured by us to-day. But the fault lies with us, not with the Master's message. No student, no householder, no priest but must offer daily *yagna*. What sacrifice shall *we* offer?—is the question asked by several young men. What sacrifice, they ask, shall *we* offer to strengthen the Swaraj Movement? We are not rich; we are not men of power and resources; what sacrifice shall *we* offer at this anxious hour in India's history? To such young men the text in the Gita answers thus: "He who offereth me a leaf, a flower a fruit, water,—that I accept, if given with *bhakti*."

These things cost nothing in Aryavarta. Not even fruit! Roads were fringed with fruit-trees. Milk and butter and fruit and corn cost very little. To-day, everything costs; there are young men who pay two annas to get a little water locked up in a bottle! And fruit is not within the reach of the average Indian. The things mentioned in the text cost nothing in ancient India. The text then says: "Offer any little things but with *bhakti*." It is the *yagna* of little things, the text speaks of. Big things are not necessary. Your crores, your

big organisations, your many meetings, your long processions are not what Krishna wants. He does not need your clamour and shouts. He does not need your money and your knowledge? What does your accumulated knowledge amount to, after all? A little pebble on the sea-shore of Wisdom! Up to the age of seventy-six, Alexander Von Humboldt was but gathering knowledge. He began to write what he knew at the age of seventy-six; he died at the age of ninety. He wrote the great Book called "The Cosmos". Yet what is the knowledge recorded in that Book compared to the ever-growing Volume of Wisdom? Neither money nor scholarship is what the Lord needs. What He needs is the *yagna of little things*. Before He came to the earth, the Lord lived,—according to a Puranic story,—in Gokula; and how did he live there? As an humble Cowherd! And when Vrija, the maiden "always sixteen years old," according to the Book, met him in gokula, did she wear rich clothes? In the Puranas we read she came out of the River to touch the feet of the Lord and she was "decorated with leaves". And what humility he showed when, according to a story, Radha

was angry with him and called him names ? "Quit my house," she said. And he spoke not a word of anger. Krishna "the Guide of the Gods" was *silent* ! In what humility he came to the Earth when India's need was great ! He came in an humble garb. He was born in a 'prison' or a cave. He mixed with simple peasants. He sang simple songs. Not even Arjuna could realise the Infinite Ideal incarnate in him until, in a few blessed moments, the Lord gave Arjuna a glimpse of that world-vision which a passage of great beauty, and thought,—one of the greatest passages, to my mind, in World-Literature—hints at in the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna asked for the *yagna* of *little things*. Not *power* but *bhakti* is what he asks us to offer. And what is offered with *bhakti*, with *humility*, with *love* becomes a *yagna*.

It is *yagna* that is needed to secure *swaraj*. Politics of petitions have not helped us. I call such politics "*professionalism*". Politics of *blind* acceptance of this creed or that will not help us. I call such politics "*ritualism*". The *yagna*, the worship we should give is the worship of *free minds*. Whatever stifles *freedom of thought and speech* stifles *swaraj*. The

Swaraj—struggle means nothing if it be not a struggle for freedom—personal, social, national, inter-national, intellectual, economic, religious. If to-day, we eliminate from the Struggle elements and tendencies of pride, passion, intolerance, abuse, hate, the Movement will, I believe, become a *yagna*. And the power to achieve is the power of *yagna*. Nations have long trusted to war and violence for securing freedom ; they have strengthened their armies and navies ; neither militarism nor navalism has solved the world's problem. Nations have believed in striking the sword for freedom. The way of freedom, I have often said, is *not* the way of violence. It is the way of *yagna*, sacrifice. And India's solution, I believe, will be through Sacrifice. They who lift up the sword perish by the sword. The bureaucracy in India is very strong ; it offers resistance, you say, to the national ideal. Let us fling ourselves against the resistance with sacrifice ; and we shall win. Glad self-giving in India's service,—that, I believe, will generate a *moral power* which is, to my mind, a necessary precondition of national freedom.

What are we asked to give ? “ A leaf, a

flower, a fruit, water." But we must make our offering in the spirit of *bhakti*. What is the "leaf", (*patra* is the word in the Gita), which we may offer in the service of the Nation at this hour? Every little bit of a swadeshi cloth, every little thread of a swadeshi garment is, to my mind, a "*patra*" acceptable to the Lord. For every such bit or thread helps the poor of India; and they are among the *rupas*, the forms of the Lord. To help a poor man is to serve Shri Krishna. When swadeshi is voluntarily accepted by every Indian and becomes the Nation's *yagna*, we may know that our Day of Freedom is nigh. Not till then.

Then there is the *yagna* of 'water' referred to in the text. There is a beautiful custom in Sind. Big jars may be found in summer at different places. They are filled with water which is supplied free to thousands of passengers, every day. Some rich man in the locality pays for the expenses and believes he earns merit (*punya*) thereby. It is a *punya* to give water to the thirsty. Many young men cannot afford to spend money. But they, too, can give the 'water' of sympathy to the poor. Giving water signifies *fellowship with the poor*.

*Fellowship with the poor* will bring nearer the day of swaraj. As it is, we cannot say we have *realised our unity* with the poor of India.

Then there is the *yagna* of "flower". *Pushpa* is the word used in the text. In Hindu worship, flowers are offered to the gods. What flowers shall we offer in the nation's *yagna* of to-day? A mother was weeping. "My son, my dear son!" she said. "They have removed him from me; they have taken him to the jail for serving the country: I sit here and weep. He is snatched away!" "Yes," I said to her, "snatched away from your garden. But not gone. Your flower is at Krishna's feet." I do not know how many fathers and mothers are ready to train their sons for the service of the Nation. The Korean Struggle for Freedom was blessed by girl martyrs. How many of Indian boys and girls will be prepared by their parents to bless India's Struggle for Freedom?

Then there is the *yagna* of 'fruit'. What is the fruit of life? *Suffering for the Ideal*. Life's 'fruit' is not comfort or pleasure or fame. 'Life's fruit is *tapasya*. A Nation's *tapasya*,—that is what Shri Krishna wants to-day.

Swaraj, I believe, will be secured in the measure our national Struggle has at its heart the spirit of *tapasya*. I am afraid there is in the Movement, as it is in some places, an element of impatience and intolerance, of passion and hate. What is there impossible to achieve if the Struggle be dominated by the spirit of *tapasya*? Of Guru Arjun Dev, a Teacher of the Sikhs, it is said, the king's men persecuted him. They made him sit on red-hot iron plates. They threw on his body red burning sands. What was his sin? He taught the Doctrine of Equality; and he loved the masses. He was thrown into jail. He had a friend in a big Muslim divine popularly known as Hazrat. Hazrat had a large following—Hazrat met the Guru in jail. Hazrat said to him: "I want to release you by force or by creating a revolution in the Punjab." But the Guru said to him: "Hazrat—my suffering is good. I must not be avenged. In the measure I suffer will the Cause flourish. I will not incite people against law. Let the People resist tyranny with Prayer." The Guru showed the spirit and power of *tapaspa*. He became a builder of the Sikh Nation.

Most of the modern teachers of ethics in the West have said : The Good is happiness. The teaching of the Gita is : The Good is Sacrifice. The teaching is not pessimistic ; there is a deep optimism in that teaching. For sacrifice is glad self-giving. And if this spirit of glad self-giving be born again among India's classes and masses, India will vindicate her Ancient Wisdom ; India will show to the Nations how Freedom may be won without war or violence.



## ON THE BATTLEFIELD

"On the *dharmakshetra* the Holy Field of Battle, what did the Pandava do, O Sanjaya?" (Gita, I. 1.)

THE opening verse of the Gita sounds the very keynote running through the Master's Song. Krishna argues; Krishna expounds a profound philosophy of life; sometimes, Krishna rebukes Arjuna; again and again, Krishna appeals to Arjuna's sense of honour. The one dominant thought of Krishna rings out in the words: "Therefore, O Arjuna! stand up to fight!" The words uttered five thousand years ago have, I believe, a meaning for us at this hour: "What have you done on the *dharmakshetra*, the field of Life?"

What have we done? Every one of us is writing a *shastra*, a *jeevan-veda*, a scripture of life.; what story does it tell of the part we have played? What have we done on the

battle-field? Had our food and clothes and slept? Sought ease and comfort? But there is, in each, one of us, a hidden Self that will not be satisfied with the things so often sought. That Self is in a region unsuspected, undiscovered; but sometimes, it makes its presence felt; the hidden Self appears—and it manifests itself in many ways. Sometimes, you are on a mountain height and see Nature clothed with wondrous beauty, and the thrill of a new experience passes through you; the hidden Self has made its power felt. You serve a sick friend, and in the silence of your sorrow at an hour when the world's voices are asleep, the hidden Self manifests itself, and you glimpse a little of the meaning of life. You listen to a Singer; you see a *sadhu*; you hear a patriotic speech or song; and you feel you are a new man; you resolve to be a servant of the Ideal. In many ways does the hidden Self appear. You close the doors but, again and again, the Self opens one or the other of them and looks at you and you feel that you are greater than you thought yourselves to be. The hidden Self is your deepest Self; it is the God-Self; and to live is to

do the battles of the God-Self. Therefore do I ask young men to regard life, not as a bed of roses, but as a *dharmakṣhetra*, a field of battle.

Poets and preachers and patriots and teachers have this one task,—in diverse ways to teach us how to fight the battles of God, to fight and not to faint. The God-Self is waging a mighty struggle with evil in the world and needs our co-operation ; each one of us is called upon to battle against evil customs, against political servitude, against suffering and pain and ignorance, against hypocrisy and unreality.

If we would be faithful soldiers of the God-Self we must have an equipment. This equipment is the Triple Training referred to, again and again, in the Gita. The body is a temple of God, a *Brahma-mandiram* ; and young men must keep their bodies pure and strong so that the God-Self may work through them for the uplift of India. As to mind-training, we should be loyal to our *truth-impulses*. Truth is what the mind seeks in the study of science and history and philosophy, of nature and consciousness. This study is not fruitful in the case of men who lack the *longing* to know the truth ;

truth comes only to the truth-seeker ; and we must practise the Sadhan of truth in daily life. It is a difficult sadhan ; but it must be practised. How often men indulge in exaggeration, idle rumours, gossip, harsh thinking, speaking ill of opponents ! All this must be given up if, indeed, we are in quest of the Truth that will make the Nation free.

With regard to the training of emotions, I feel that the urgency at this hour is to develop *love-emotion*. There is strife and conflict in the world of to-day ; there is much dissociation and lovelessness in India's life to-day. Let us fight against evils but with no hate in our hearts. Hate weakens the moral fibre ; and the struggle for India's freedom, as I conceive of it, will not be short. But there is hope if there be bands of young men eager to have the "triple training" referred to in the Gita. Such young men growing silent with love in their hearts and faith in their eyes will, I believe, sustain the Struggle to success. They will have the strength to adventure their all for making India free. ✓

## IN TUNE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL

Whatever is true, good, beautiful, sublime,—know that as going forth from a Fragment of my Splendour. (Gita, X. 41.)

A GREAT Vaishnava poet of Bengal,—Vidyapati,—puts in Radha's mouth the words : "From the days of my birth have I seen his Beauty ; yet are my eyes unsatisfied." Radha worshipped Krishna as the Beautiful One. Chaitanya, Mirabai and several others of the mediæval mystics loved to meditate upon the master as *Syam Sundaram*. To them the Krishna-story was not, as it is to several European critics, a 'vegetation cult.' To them Krishna was a Reality, and communion with his beauty the very summit of wisdom. There is an inner movement in every world-religion ; to it belong the mystics, the seers, the *bhaktas* ; and have they not, in one way or another,

dwelt upon the idea of God the Beautiful? Æsthetic souls—these mystics and seers; the Sufis of Ancient Iran spoke of the ‘Rose-garden of Union’; Nanak and Kabir sang of Eternal Loveliness; Chaitanya was immersed in the thought of the ‘Beautiful One’; Christ and his disciples considered the ‘lilies in the field’ and communed with the Beautiful in Nature and in the Kingdom that is Within. To be a seer is to know that there is nothing better than to be Beautiful.

I am afraid, the value of communion with the Beautiful is not realised in the modern age. Rationalism is afraid of the poetic, the mystical; ‘reformed’ religions feel shy of the symbols of ancient faiths—the symbols which express the Beauty of life; our ‘intellectuals’ regard the personification of Nature as a ‘poetic license’; industrialism has invaded the many departments of life; factory system has reacted on our tastes; our education is not in touch with flowers and animals; and the life of the average man, to-day, is full of sordid cares and struggle for livelihood. O! for a glimpse of the glory of those Great Days, when in Aryavarta, people lived a life of

sympathy with Nature ! Old Sanskrit literature is full of references to the bright and beautiful things of nature ; and in the Mundakopanishad the aspiration is uttered—" Oh God, let us hear the Beautiful with our ears ! O Holy one ! let us see the Beautiful with our eyes ! " What the critics have ignorantly called the Hindu's ' animism ' or ' paganism ' is a witness to the Hindu's worship of the Beautiful. The Aryan was not afraid of personifying Fire and Clouds and Rain and Water and the Earth ; are they not all vestures of the One Person—the Eternal Artist who has evolved out of His Nature the Living Work we call the Universe ? Much of what passes current as ' religion ' to-day is irreligious ; it ignores the Wonder of the World. Aryan ' animism,' with its worship of the Innite immanent in earth and water and the starry skies, was nearer the heart of the Universe than are several of your ' scientific ' religions which become unscientific in their efforts to withdraw the ' veil ' which is the condition of Manifestation,—of Knowledge and Worship and Love. India built Forest-Universities so that students might live in

fellowship with the Beautiful in Nature ; she built *asramas* and temples on river-banks and in places invested with nature's beauty ; how could there be worship without a vision of the Beautiful ? She encouraged hand-loom which turned out beautiful fabrics ; how superior the hand-woven fabrics to the crude Manchester goods ! Where will you find aught to compare with Hala pottery or the beautiful tiles of Tatta,—the ancient capital of Sind ? The architecture of Islam, the Swadeshi crafts of India, the fretted roofs of Hindu temples, the kafis and ballads of Muslim mystics, the songs and legends sung by Hindu *bhaktas* are a witness to India's Quest of the Shrine where breathes the benediction of God the Beautiful.

What is Beauty ? Beauty is not a matter merely of 'shapes' and 'forms,' of 'straight lines and circles' ; it *does* involve symmetry, proportion, measure ; but it is not simply geometrical, mathematical ; Krupp-guns have measure, symmetry ; will you call them *beautiful* ? Beauty is not prettiness ; it is not a matter of colour ; the Sadhu's face may not be pretty but it is *beautiful*. Beauty is not merely a matter of *association* or *illusion* ; and it is



something more than utility. It seems to me the Beautiful has two characteristics ; the first of these may be indicated by the Sanskrit word, *ahetu* ; disinterestedness, spontaneity,—there you have one mark of the Beautiful. A person dressing or talking or behaving *artificially* is unbeautiful ; a star, a flower, a child are beautiful ; they have no artificial motive of activity ; the star shines on, the flower blooms on, the child smiles or plays with a spontaneity which only expresses *its own life*. Not without reason have beauty and simplicity been associated together ; and your 'schools of Beauty' do little credit to civilization. Another characteristic of the Beautiful may be indicated by the Sanskrit word—*santi*. Absence of discord, harmony, restfulness,—this is what you find in the Beautiful ; this is common to the outer beauty of form and colour, the mental beauty of the sage, and the spiritual beauty of the sadhu ; the Beautiful gives you, for the moment, a refuge from the discordant ; the Beautiful calls you, for the moment, to a Home of Harmony. But having said this, let me say that beauty is yet something more : the truth is, there is something elusive about the

beautiful ; and the Jewish thinker of the Middle Ages was not wrong when he said :—‘ Beauty vanishes as soon as we try to analyse it.’ Beauty is elusive because it belongs to the Spiritual Energy of the Universe ; it is a glimpse, an intuition, an expression of Eternal Loveliness, a Benediction of the Unseen flowing into the worlds made manifest to outer senses and the inner intelligence of man ; beauty is a shining of the Eternal Self, a ‘ going forth,’ as Krishna says, from a fragment of His splendour. It is a partial unveiling of the face of God. The Creative Artist has set himself on Nature’s path and in the heart and life of man ; and when He lifts the veil to give us a glimpse of Himself, we have a vision of the Beautiful.

There are definite qualifications which a man must have if he would see Him in His Beauty ; and mystical books speak of them at length. I may refer to two of these. And the first is : *wisdom of the child-heart*. On a child the gift of beauty descends in abundance ; and we must be children in the heart if we would enter into the Kingdom of the Beautiful. Not without reason is the revelation of Love associated

with Child-Krishna. Is not the one mark of the child-life just this that it is a life of daily dependence on another ? The child does not question ; the child *trusts* and follows the leading of the Mother. So must every one in quest of the Beautiful practise daily dependence on the Divine, following the Light that shines in the Inner Shrine. There is such a thing as the Law of Waiting in the spiritual world ; and the longer you wait, the more you get. Wait in trust, and you will realise more and more that the Earth is beautiful and the Unseen still more beautiful.

We need the child-heart ; we also need to dedicate ourselves to His will. This self-dedication is more than *service* ; to serve is good, but there is something better than service ; it is the readiness to give our all to Him who fulfils Himself in many ways ; to be a worker is good, but there is something better ; it is to present oneself to Him, to eliminate *ahankāra*, egoself, and be an *instrument* of the Lord. This self-dedication may mean suffering ; but they who tread the Path of which I speak, they know that every suffering for His sake is a contribution to the universe. He breaks

those whom He would bless ; your very work, built with the labour of love, your institution, your organisation may be broken ; be not nervous ; be ready to give all ; be ready to give even your work, and believe that He fulfils himself in many ways.

To glimpse his Beauty is to know the humility of his Love ; the All-Great humbles Himself to draw us to Himself through nature, through the power of great souls and through suggestions of the spirit within. God the Beautiful is God the Irresistible in History, the God who gets in. So many in India have tried to shut God out, throwing veil after veil, in their selfish pursuit of pleasure and greed, over the Beauty that is Life, over the Truth that is Freedom. But He is irresistible ; He has entered into the Life of the Nation ; you could imagine the light of the sun shut out ; who could shut out the Beautiful One ? In the sweep of India's life to-day, the seer's eye may still discern the footsteps of the Lord ; He has touched, He has entered in the life of the Nation. Who then can keep India in bondage, and who take away from India's children the privilege of serving Freedom in the storm and stress of to-day?

## WHAT VISION DO YOU WORSHIP ?

“ Behold, O Partha, forms of me, a hundredfold, a thousandfold, diverse, divine ”. (Gita, XI. 5.)

It seems to me that image-worship was not common in the ages of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Then came Buddha ; and he preached a wondrously beautiful Religion of Humanity. After he passed away, image-worship was common. Why ? Full of tender grace and beauty was the life of the Buddha ; and after the death of his physical body, the disciples longed to see the Form of their master. Buddha's Images were made in large numbers, —many of them in Sind. For there was a time, as students of Sindhi history know, when Buddhism was a great power in Sind ; and excavations in this Province may still discover old Buddhist remains. Image-worship spread with remarkable rapidity in Sind and other

parts of India. To-day, some offer worship without *images*. Yet is not some Form, some *murti*, some *picture* necessary ? Whom do you worship ? God, you say. The Formless one, I wish to say, has many Forms ; and our life has missed its meaning until it has learnt to commune with Him in one or the other of His Forms. "Behold, O Partha, forms of me, a hundredfold, a thousandfold, diverse, divine," —says Krishna in the Gita. These Forms I interpret to mean Life's Visions ; Plato called them 'Ideas' ; Shri Krishna calls them '*rupas*'.

Not a Teacher, a Prophet, a Servant of Humanity but has one or the other of these Forms to enrich and nourish his life. Rightly are they called 'visions' in the books of Catholic Mystic Theology. The 'Forms' come with a peculiar power to those who receive them ; they impress themselves on their lives with unshakable strength ; they revolutionise their lives, making them servants of man, Prophets and Sons of God. Read the story of Nanak's Life. He is young ; he bathes in a Lake ; there comes to him a wondrous vision ; he sees the Unseen ; he hears a Voice telling him to go and proclaim the message of the Holy Name. So you have

in his Songs and Sayings the teaching declared, again and again, —Sing the Name and be Strong. That, to my mind, is the eternal meaning and message of the Sikh Religion. Read, again, the story of Chaitanya's life. His life is enriched by another 'Form' of the Formless Spirit. In a blessed moment comes to him a vision of God the Beautiful. And he goes out of his College to streets and the market place; he moves out to villages and towns in Bengal to preach to his people the message of God the Beautiful. This Chaitanya was a Lover of the Beautiful; the Beautiful One, he taught, removed impurities and sins; therefore he spoke of God as Hari; Hari means, literally, 'one who takes away'; the beautiful 'takes away' impurities, makes us rich and strong; and the burden of his Song was ever this,—*haribol*, *.haribol*: Sing Hari, Sing the Beautiful One!

In other lands outside India, too, have such souls appeared, great Teachers and Prophets and Patriots; and their lives have been nourished on communion with one or another of the Forms of the Eternal. One such man was Socrates; not a cold 'intellectual' thinker

he ; he was a wise man, a philosopher ; and his disciple, Plato, tells us in one of his 'Dialogues' that a condition of philosophy is *moral enthusiasm*. Socrates worked for the uplift of Athens with *moral enthusiasm*. The authorities at Athens were mightily offended at his teaching : they troubled him ; they asked him to be silent ; he could not keep silent ; they had a mock-trial of him ; they gave him a cup of hemlock to drink ; Socrates went the way of the world's great ones,—persecuted, lied against, meeting calumnies and persecutions with the power of the soul. Whence came to him that power ? To him, too, had come a *rupa* of God a vision of the Most High ; he called it 'dæmon' ; he obeyed this 'dæmon'. On one occasion he rose to speak, and after a little while, he sat down ; they asked him why he did so ; he said his 'dæmon' asked him to do so ! Several of the incidents in his life he referred over to his 'dæmon' ; the world did not understand them ; he could not help it ; he tried to be loyal to the spirit within him ; he adored the vision of his life.

What vision do we worship ? Have we a



rupa, an image of the Master in our hearts ? Some, I know, say they have risen above image-worship ; and yet they run after silver and gold and women and the world ! I ask young men to cast out such images, and to establish other images—the Master's images—in their hearts. He has a Form, a *rupa*, a vision for every one of us ; to get it from Him is to know the *meaning* of our life. With that vision in our heart, we shall feel rich and strong in a world where riches and power have made so many poor and weak. Men may revile us, then ; sufferings may assail us then ; but we shall stand invincible, unconquerable—bearing in our hands the Banner of India the Immortal.

## SRADDHANJALI

"He who is full of Faith obtaineth Wisdom." (Gita, III. 39.)

THE attitude of faith is confronted in our days by the double challenge of modern life, the challenge of secularism and the challenge of criticism and science. The call of commercialism is growing ; struggle for livelihood is keener than ever before ; the needs of physical existence clamour for satisfaction ; problems of poverty and the unemployed press for solution ; the socio-economic conditions of man's existence on the earth must be reckoned with : what room, it is often asked, is there for *faith* in the modern Age ? Faith is confronted, too, by a challenge of the reflective consciousness of the Age. Science, psychology, criticism, comparative studies in religion,—have they not created a revulsion against religion ? "We have reached a definite spiritual crisis," wrote

Eucken. Many, indeed, there be who echo the sentiment of Hume : " Examine the religious principles which have, in fact, prevailed in the world, and you will be persuaded that they are hardly anything but sickmen's dreams."

Is faith, then, a sickman's dream ? Interrogate the Spirit of the Age and consider if modern thought and life are not rather a witness to the *essential value*, the *truth* of Religion. Anthropology and the comparative science of religions point to the truth that *man is incurably religious* : higher criticism and science have discredited *dogmatic theology* but not *religion*. The daily deepening interest in the economic conditions of life, the new emphasis on the social side, the new demands of national consciousness—are not these a witness to faith in life ? The heart of the age cries out for social mysticism ; it is this note of social mysticism which is sounded by the Gita. Never was the opportunity greater for the message of Sri Krishna. Religion is organic to human nature ; each soul is rooted in God as flower in the soil.

The question arises : what is faith *sraddha* ?

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Many regard faith as the 'inactivity of reason': this is the 'authority-faith' which has produced sectarianism and externalism. So great a theologian as Dr. Harnack missed the point when he said that science and philosophy had little to do with religion and that religion did not need them. But religion is life and a life-system; and it is not possible to ignore the values and sanctions of science. And is it not true that all truths are in accord one with the other—that they form one Brotherhood? There is no conflict between reason and faith. Reason appears in the course of evolution to help man adapt himself to his environment,—to Nature and Society. But man's environment is larger: man wants to adapt himself to the Unseen. Thus arises faith to supplement 'reason,' and both co-operate to help the evolution of man. Faith-consciousness is the feeling that the Invisible is Immanent; it is the feeling of God-with-us: it is the feeling which appreciates *values* (as understanding describes *forms*) of the *Ideal Realm*; it is the feeling that the Universe is reliable. It is *Insight* which is more than sight: it is heart's intelligence, vision of the Heart. This vision

comes with shutting the eyes to the obvious : it comes with rising above the sense-view of things, and feeling after the Highest and following its lead in the midst of the gathering gloom of life. That poet-philosopher of England, Coleridge, said: "My eyes see pictures when they are shut." The prophet, the teacher of truth, the patriot, the martyr—every man of *sraddha* knows how to shut his eyes to the obvious, the seeming, the apparent—and see the loveliness of the Right, the True, the Pure. It is this vision of the heart which enables the man of faith to be loyal to the Ideal in darkness and in death.

Let me proceed to note some of the contents of faith-consciousness. And the first thing I note is : apprehension of the *reality of the Ideal*. The man of faith is convinced that the Ideal is the essential truth of life.

Receptiveness of the Ideal's influence is another characteristic of the man of faith. Such a man realises the value of silence and meditation ; he believes in the power of repose secured in recollective moments ; he is as a child daily depending on the Spirit, never using the *Atman* for his own selfish purpose,

but ever open to the influence of the Spirit in the daily actions and aspirations of life.

The man of *sraddha*, in the third place, is one who meets the challenge of sorrow in a spirit of self-surrender. He passes through the 'dark night of the soul' with absolute confidence in the Silent Omnipotent Atman. The world's evils do not disturb him; he has had a vision of the heart; he has seen the Sun shining in the sky: and though clouds may cross again and again, the feeling abides that the Sun is *not* obliterated. An old Jewish story tells of a mother who consented to sacrifice all her sons,—seven in number,—rather than let one of them be disloyal to the King of kings. Suffering is the test of faith.

What offering does the man of *sraddha* give to the Lord? He offers his *manas*. How can that be?—it may be asked; is not reason a candle of the Lord? By *manas* is meant not the Higher Reason but the principle of calculation: *manas* is prudence: and is not prudence "the arithmetic of fools?" The man of faith consults no hedonic calculus; he does not think of 'consequences; he bears and suffers; he will not be disloyal to Truth'.

“They are slaves who would not choose  
 Hatred, scoffing and abuse,  
 Rather than in silence shrink  
 From the Truth they needs must think !  
 They are slaves who would not be  
 In the right with two or three.”

Calculation, unkind criticism, gossip, sectarianism,—these express the lower *manas*. Again, *sradha* demands that *desires* also be offered to the Lord ; give up pride, self-righteousness, national arrogance, desire for earthly things : make the heart pure : then may you reach the state of *nirvana* which is the “ extinction of desire ”, Another offering still : it is the offering of the *will*. The end of our desires—so personal, so selfish—is pain ; the end of self-will is sin of which the wages is sorrow. The death of self is essential to the birth of immortal life. The man of *sradha* makes *Atman* the centre of our life, acknowledges Shri Krishna in all, accepts the discipline of world-pressure, passes through the ‘gloom-land’ and ‘deathland’ with the sacred Vision in his heart and the Sacred Song on his lips.

Did you ever meditate on the *self-givingness*

of God to man ? God is the Spirit for ever giving Himself; this is the *leela* of the Universe. He gives himself to us : what shall *we* give ? A Vedic hymn asks : " What shall we offer to the Lord ? " What shall we offer ? We come to the Sacred Door often in the company of our little selves. He wants us to surrender ourselves to Him : we give Him an empty prayer, a little sermon, a superfluity. His voice calls us to an abiding fellowship through self-donation : we hesitate to give Him the offering of self. Beautiful were the words sung by Shri Chaitanya : " Service of the lotus-feet of *Mukunda* . " The man of *sraddha* takes refuge at the Lotus-feet of the Lord and has his joy in the ' service of Mukunda ' : therefore is his life fruitful. *Fruitfulness* is a test of true faith. The faith that is not fruitful is only a fancy, an emotion, a sentiment. Faith is a mighty force which incarnates itself in the institutions and appointments of life. So Jesus said : " He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit . " He that abideth in the Lord has learnt the lesson of self-emptying ; and the Lord takes him up and fills him with his breath and his life becomes dynamic. Do



not seek yourself and your work will be vital ; be poor in spirit, and you will rest flute-like upon the lips of the Lord and your life will be melodious with His music. There is restlessness to-day ; the world-conditions have become complex ; the struggle between capital and labour has assumed enormous proportions ; the colour problem is pressing for a solution. These and other problems of special bearing upon India—problems of the ‘ depressed classes’ and rural population, of India’s women and India’s youngmen— will not be solved by statemanship which is afraid of the inspiration of true Faith. Faith in Humanity and in the Atman whose breath is in the Human Race is, to my mind, essential to a satisfactory study and solution of the complex world-problems of the age. Do we wish to build up a great Nation ? Then must we work in faith. Some times I say to myself :—If the Lord is passing by, passing by the streets and crowded marts of our cities, passing by our schools and social clubs, our lecture-halls and temples, we offer Him no gift but stay within the lodgings of our little selfish sectarian life.

Little flowers of faith does the Lord ask of

us : is that too much ? Faithfulness in little things ; is that too much ? To walk the humble way to strive, to work as in His Presence : is that too much ? A story is told of the famous Italian Artist,—Leonardo de Vinci ; he was young and his master asked him once to paint ; he felt so diffident ; how could he do it ? He thought he would spoil his master's good repute ; but the master pressed him. And Leonardo de Vinci knelt down and prayed that he longed to do his work "to the service of my master"—prayed for the grace of God to crown his labours with success. And when the picture was finished,—charged with grace and beauty,—his master exclaimed in joy : "My son ! I need paint no more : thou hast done it well." So true it is that all work is blessed which is done to "the service of the Master". Such faith is wisdom. The life of faith is the surrendered life. It may be lived in the daily round of duties ; daily work is a field for the play of *sraddha*. And we grow in Wisdom by self-rununciation. *Sraddha* in Sanskrit means, also, the 'longing of a woman' ; and if we have the longing of the woman-soul for the Lord, the *gopi's* longing

for Krishna—we may know what it is to make the faith-offering which He asks of us to make India free.

## THE AGNOSTIC ATTITUDE

A THOUSAND changes have swept over India since the "Lord's Song" was sung. Dynasties have risen and fallen. One kingdom after another has crumbled as a house of cards. New types of culture, new types of civilisation have entered the land. The Greek, the Scythian, the Pathan, the Afghan, the Moghul—each has come, drawn by India's fatal gift of beauty,—each has come, each has gone. But the Song, the Ancient Song, the Song of Shri Krishna, the Bhagavad-Gita lives on. Wonderful is the vitality of its Wisdom.

The one word which often occurs in the book is *Atman*. The word is translated as 'Self'. A study of the 'Self' engaged the attention of *Asramas* and Universities in *Aryavarta*. Many things, to-day, are studied by

India's young men but not alas! the 'Self'. Many of the young men even in the nationalist camp say: We are agnostic! There was a time, I know, when several young men called themselves 'atheists'. Atheism was one of the 'modern' things sent us from the West; it had the charm of novelty! To-day they talk of 'agnosticism'!

The word 'agnosticism,' it may be remembered, was first used by Huxley. He expressed its essence in two principles thus: "*positively*—in matters of intellect follow your reason as far as it will take you without any regard to any other consideration; *negatively*—in matters of intellect do not pretend that conclusions are certain which are not demonstrated or demonstrable". Agnosticism, thus interpreted, is but another name for *intellectual integrity*. With such agnosticism the Gita has no quarrel. Intellectual honesty is a *virtue* which cannot be sufficiently emphasised in these days when young men have illusions of numbers and great names. What is *popular* need not, often is not, *true*; and what a 'great man' may hold *may* be untrue. Agnosticism as a plea for *veracity* is an attitude I welcome.

But the word is not often used in this sense. By 'agnosticism' is meant often, the attitude which *ignores* belief in the *Atman*, the Self. To be an agnostic in this sense is to ignore God, to be *not* bad or vicious, but God-less. Can we dispense with an idea of the *Atman*, the Self? Modern science postulates order and evolution. And I have often thought that to be deep in science is to be led into the very presence of a Self directing and determining the phenomena of nature. In a famous speech Kelvin said: "Science positively affirms Creative Power." So a philosophic interpreter of evolution, Prof. Henslow, pointed out that the "favourable variations" of which the Darwinian spoke indicated a '*responsive action*' to the needs of the animal. This '*responsive action*' is the 'Self' working in Nature.

In a deeper sense than most may know the word for the 'world-problem' is the *Atman*, the Self. To study the world-problem is to study the Self. The student in ancient India studied literature, science, arts; the inspiration of his studies was *brahmavidya*—study of the Self. The *Atman*, the Self touches our

consciousness. It is the *condition* of experience, as it is the groundwork of Nature. The *Atman* lives in the dynamic flux of things. The *Atman* lives in our soul-consciousness. And because the *Atman* lives, we have the assurance that pain is passing, that the final word of evolution is Peace (*Santi*). In being an agent of the *Atman*, does a man fulfil the purpose of his life. In the midst of the toil and trouble and sorrow of the day, each one of us, I believe, may hear the Flute calling us to let the Self work through us to usher in a day when man may wear the triumph-crown of truth and love. The true idealist becomes *vital* because through him works the Great Self. And as the *Atman* is the Spirit of Humanity, the true idealist is not a narrow nationalist. His nationalism is charged with reverence for Humanity. To deny humanity is to deny the *Atman*. And he who worships the *Atman* can have no hate in his heart. On this note let this chapter close. In education and social work, in politics and national activities, are we denying Humanity? Are we denying Humanity in the Swaraj Movement, in the Struggle of to-day? Are we denying the

West *its* place in the Temple of our Hearts ? Is not Europe, too, of Humanity ? One thing I feel sure of. The message of the Gita is not for us alone ; it is for the world. For the message came to Arjavarta from the World-Heart, from one who is meant not for Indian alone but for Humanity. If 'nationality' fails to be a spiritual principle, it will become, as indeed 'religions' have become again and again, an obstacle to the God-life. To believe in the *Atman* is to believe that Humanity is higher than the Nations.



## PATH OF THE PRACTICAL REASON

"This teaching is in accordance with the Sankhya. Hear it now according to the Yoga." (Gita.)

SANKHYA is a system founded by the Sage Kapila. A mighty thinker, this Kapila. He shows wonderful, analytical skill in developing his system. Sankhya is a suggestive blend of science and logic; and several passages in Kapila's *sutras* have reminded me of Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy" and Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe" and "History of Creation". Young men study science and logic. Yet life is not all logic. "Hear now the Teaching according to the Yoga,"—says Krishna to Arjuna. If Sankhya be *speculative reason*, may I not interpret Yoga as *practical reason*? Yoga, Krishna tells us in a later passage, is connected with *action*. Yoga, says the Master, is *karma sukāshalam*. Yoga is *skill in action*.

May I not say Yoga is the Science of *life*? And Krishna expounds it on a battle-field which was soon to be a scene of *death*! Krishna's science of life teaches, also, a science of death! The 'skill' of which Krishna speaks does not mean *diplomacy*, cleverness of the worldly-wise. Clever men, as Huxley said, are plenty as black berries. India has plenty of *clever* men. India will not be helped by cleverness, by diplomacy. If we would develop in us the power of *Yoga* if we would walk the way of Practical Reason, let us give up diplomacy. Let us be simple. Truth is simple. Loyalty to it will not make you *popular*; but it will make you a *man*; and you will realise that the path of service is not the path of popularity.

Then there is another weakness we must overcome if we would walk the Way of Practical Reason, the Way of Yoga. It is the weakness of *sentimentalism*. Far be it from me to condemn emotion. Emotion is language of the heart. Love is an emotion; and Krishna was a great Lover. Emotions enrich life. But sentimentalism weakens it. Great souls let love shine in *action*; with the majority love

or sympathy is only a soft sentiment. A young man hears a lecture, say, on Mazzini. "What a fine lecture!" he says; and 'What a patriot, Mazzini!' His feelings stop there. They do not proceed to *action*. He is *sentimental*. A man learns that there is famine in the district; he learns of the suffering of men, women, and children; he even sheds tears; but he does nothing to help in removing the distress; he suffers from *sentimentalism*; he has not developed *practical reason*. There are men, I know, who sit to the *puja* because the hymns are sweetly sung; "What a fine hymn we heard!" they say; their interest in religion does not go further; it is, at best, an æsthetic interest; they are like the man of whom Shri Ram Krishna Paramhansa spoke in his parable, —the man who looked at a 'flower,' called it 'beautiful' but did not glimpse the beauty of the Atman in his heart! There are men who shed tears when a hymn is sung but do all sorts of things after the worship is over! I ask youngmen to give up the luxury of tears in religion and the luxury of lip-patriotism in politics. The man who would walk the way of Yoga, as the Gita says, "practises austerity".

Give up *diplomacy* ; give up *sentimentalism* ; and, in the third place, give up *fear*. If we would walk the way of Practical Reason we must have *courage*. The Path of Yoga is not a Path strewn with roses ; none without courage can walk the Way. It is not often remembered that courage is a *spiritual quality*. To have courage is to believe in the Ideal, not in numbers. There is to-day, a growing materialism which judges by reference to numbers. "O, the Movement is so popular !" young men say. To them let me say : Comrades ! numbers mean little. What matters is not numbers, not money, not popularity, not 'success'—but Ishwara's Will. Are you endeavouring to be servants of the One Will, the One Actor ? If you would have "skill in action," if you would enter into the One Service, have faith *not* in numbers but in the *Atman*, the Self. The Self is in you. Therefore take care of your thoughts and desires and build up a strong will-power. Over and over again is the truth declared in Gita and Yoga Shastras that thoughts are real forces. Over and over again is the declaration made that the power which binds and builds is the

power of will. That power is in you. Only it needs to be set free. Fear sits upon it. Cast out fear, then. Is not this the teaching, given us, again and again, in the Gita? Krishna came to give the world the great message that men must drive out the slave-soul, sudra-soul, that men must have soldier-souls and fight the Battles of God! There is argument in the Gita; there is vision in it; but there is, also, in that wonderful Song of the Ages a Call to us to stand up and fight for truth and right. You say the Cause is unpopular; you say many are arrayed against it. The Master says: don't be afraid of numbers or power; these are illusions; but the Flag of Truth is not an illusion; that Flag is being challenged; stand by it and do thy *dharma*.

This is "skill in action", this is true wisdom, —to be an agent of the Eternal Will. Men with the aspiration to have this 'skill,' this 'wisdom' are often regarded as 'dreamers'. Such dreamers, I say, are *practical* in the higher sense of that word. They are not out to make money or achieve what many call 'success'. They are out to serve the Ideal.

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They are out to suffer for truth and right. Their life flows into the Ideal and flows back into the world. And out of the sufferings of *such* men will be wrought, I believe, the Freedom of the Nation.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHAIN

"From *sanga* arises desire ; from desire anger ; from anger delusion ; from delusion wandering of memory ; from that, destruction of *buddhi*." (Gita, II, 62, 63.)

KRISHNA was a *yogi* ; Krishna was a *humanist*. Asceticism as a theory of self-control and self-denial is a natural expression of spiritual life. Asceticism as a theory of self-torture is *not* a teaching of the Gita. Such ascetisim is a form of materialism. Here, as elsewhere, extremes meet. We must not confound bodily conditions with spiritual attainments. Typical of the error of asceticism is the touching story of a Christian devotee,—Lady Julian,—who prayed for three gifts from God, one of them, being that she might have a bodily sickness at thirty years of age, and another that she might have three wounds ! The Hindu mystic, as described in the Gita, does not torture his

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHAIN 113

body. He is a *worshipper* of Life. And, *therefore*, in his protest against love of ease and passion for material comfort, he does not ignore the *function of the senses*. The senses are gates of knowledge, gates through which comes to us King in His Beauty.

The Gita *does* speak of renunciation, but by it is meant *inner* renunciation, renunciation of unlawful desires. It is the *bondage of desires* from which, according to the Gita, we must free ourselves. But the Gita does not condemn *experience*. Experience has great value; experiences enrich the soul. Life is a Wonder; Nature is a Wonder; and we grow in the measure we worship the Wonder of the World. A vision of the Wonder is the *visvadarshan* spoken of in the Eleventh Discourse of the Gita. A vision of this Wonder cured Arjuna of his weakness and gave him the courage to stand up and do his *dharma*. This Wonder is the 'Supreme' in experience. And the Gita rightly says that "the objects of the senses fall away when once the Supreme is seen". When we do not see this Wonder, this Beauty of the Atman within us and beyond us in nature and humanity, we easily succumb to unlawful desire.



The texts 62-65 of the Second Chapter of the Gita are a significant *psychological explanation of the downpath of life*. The different steps are carefully indicated.

Lower life begins with *sanga*, attachment to things of passing value and the shadow-shapes which obscure a vision of the Beauty that is Life. Attachment leads to unlawful desires. Such desires give rise to *anger*. Is not anger a result of *disappointment*? The stronger our attachment, the deeper our disappointment; and the intensity of anger varies with the degree of disappointment,

From anger results '*delusion*'. To be angry is to lose, for the time being, the broader of vision of humanity. To be angry is to forget that every person is a brother, a sister. Personality is sacred. Recognition of the sacredness of man as man is our urgent need at this hour. Anger, wrath, even in the name of '*nationalism*' is, I humbly submit, unspiritual. It is also *irrational*. It blinds us, for the time being, to truth. Not without reason does the Gita speak, in one passage, of "*lust, wrath and avarice*" as the "*threefold way to hell*" and in another passage as the "*gates of darkness*".

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From *delusion* proceeds "*confused memory*". Plato spoke of 'reminiscence'; and he was right. We come from the Unseen. Not the earth but the Eternal is the home of the soul. But when the spell of *delusion* is on the soul, *home-memory* is confused. And then comes "*destruction of Reason*" (*buddhi*).

Thus is set forth the psychology of the downpath: attachment leads to desire, desire to anger, anger to delusion, delusion to confused memory, confused memory to destruction of reason. The psychological chain is complete.

*Sadhan* or *ethical discipline* is necessary to break the chain. We are not to run away but "move," to quote Krishna's words, "among sense objects with senses free". We must *transform* desires. As Longfellow sings in the "Ladder of St. Augustine":

All common things, each day's events  
That with the hour begin and end,  
Our pleasures and our discontents,  
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

Not asceticism then but *ethical discipline* is the way of wisdom. It is the discipline of daily work offered as a *sacrifice* to the Lord. Regarded thus, every activity becomes

*worship.* Without this inner purpose, work becomes *maya*. In a mediæval story, a man wants that all his desires be fulfilled. So he sells his soul to Satan. Satan gives him, as the price of his soul, a magic key which can procure him what he wants. The man meets a king. The king promises to give the man what he wants, *provided* the man procures for the king a beautiful woman long dead! The man agrees to call up the woman from the dead. His magic-key can procure only *phantoms* of the beautiful woman. He feels drawn to the Phantom! He forgets, for the time being, that the form is but a phantom. He draws near to it; he tries to embrace it; the phantom vanishes; darkness sets in! Many of us are like the man in the story. Our work procures only *phantoms* and we are caught in the net of *maya*. This is Wisdom,—to offer *karma* as worship to the Eternal. As one of the Upanishads has expressed it: "He who in Peace rises from attachment attains the Light and comes forth in his own proper form." Wisdom is self-recollection; and the man who recollects himself realises that life was meant to be an oblation to the Ideal.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHAIN 117

Schopenhauer dreamt of a day when the wisdom of the East would flow back to the West. Such, too, the dream I have dreamt again and again,—the dream of an India that may be rich again in the Wisdom of the Spirit and deliver Krishna's message to a waiting world. One aspect of that message is the truth that *work*, which Europe has often interpreted in terms of *sensation* or *power*, is really meant to be a *sacrifice* to the Eternal. Modern civilization has emphasised comfort and the "I" so much that with many the meaning of life is summed up in a cult of pleasure or a cult of the ego. As contrasted with the comfort-civilization of to-day and the aggressive ideal of *domination* is the Gita's ideal of work as a *sacrifice*. I know not if a nobler view of work has yet been revealed to the Race. To me the teaching that Life is Sacrifice is the faith I strive to live by. To me the Universe tells this one story of Sacrifice in the sunny air and the sparkling sea, in the forest brake and on the purple hill, in the beauty of the rose and the music of the bird, on the mountain and in the meadow and the star. When our lives, too, sing that Story of

Sacrifice, our freedom-hour will come and the world will behold the beauty of India,—our own worshipped Mother.

## LAW OF SACRIFICE

"They who eat of the Immortal Food of Sacrifice, they pass into the eternal Brahma." (Gita.)

THERE is such a thing as the Science of Soul. To study the Science of Nature is to understand Nature's laws. To be a student of the Science of the Soul is to study laws of spiritual life. The life of the spirit has its laws. Three of them I have loved to meditate upon. They are (1) the Law of Veracity, (2) the Law of Response, and (3) the Law of Sacrifice. Of the first two I may not speak on this occasion. Of the third let me speak a word or two in the light of the teaching of him who is our master-light.

Sacrifice is the giving up of something for the sake of a Higher. Regarded in this light the universe itself is an act of sacrifice. It is a Self-giving of God to man. We read in the

Scriptures of world-sacrifice. The world, we read in one passage, is formed of *tapasya* : it is a sacrifice of Ishvara. Evolution is God's oblation, a Crucifixion of the *Atman*. The ceaseless transmutation of matter into spirit is a daily outpouring of the God-life upon Nature. This view that the Universe is the God-life breaking into many forms gives, I believe, a dignity to the soul, and a new meaning to Nature. Well does the Gita say that the world is the "Body of God".

There would be less reluctance to suffer for a Cause, did we but realise how great is the place of sacrifice in social and national evolution. Sacrifice, as it seems to me, is essential to the development of social personality. Slowly but steadily are we taught the lesson of giving up. First is the awakening of desires ; then with education and gradual drawing out of our powers in social groups and other forms of organised life is developed concentration. Every step in progress demands giving up. The awakening of intelligence and the competitions of civilised life lead to a feeling of separateness ; but as society develops, there appear patriots, reformers, heroes,

martyrs, prophets, saints,—men who are not swayed by a sense of separateness but who practise *the law of giving*. Such men are Examples in sacrifice, and without them evolution is impossible. Such men give love and devotion ; they give themselves for the uplift of the race ; they often suffer but they bring with them a spiritual force which transforms the environment and lifts society into a perception of a higher law. That spiritual force was in Krishna's Flute when listening to it men and women forgot themselves in the Singer and the Song. So in Japanese Books we read of Kuya whom men and women in cities and villages followed in large numbers drawn by the power of love.

To be ready to give up everything in the service of Love ;—this is the mark of the men who would be a living sacrifice to the Ideal. It often means suffering. The Durga, as we read in Hindu books, smites and slays. And the Christian apostle said : " Our God is a consuming Fire." What wisdom in the ancient prayer : " Reach us, O Thou Terrible, by Thy sweet compassionate face !" To be tossed to and fro and yet feel that waves of Love roll



beneath, to stand in the valley of the shadow of death and yet feel that behind the shadow is the Light, that deeper than death is Love, to be slain and yet to adore the Ideal,—this is to “eat of the Immortal Food of Sacrifice”. Not many, perhaps, among India's young men to-day who would “eat of this Food”. Yet to young men I look for realisation of my dream of India's freedom. On *their* part must be preparedness if the day of Freedom is to draw nigh. For not in Conferences and Compromise-schemes is my hope of India's Freedom. My hope is in Bands of Youngmen. Therefore I plead for the opening of Liberty-*ashramas* everywhere. Therefore I ask that young men be trained in the Hard School. Such young men will not fail. And their very ashes will whisper :—India is Free.

## FLAME OF THE HEART

"I am the Fire." (Gita, IX, 16.)

FLAME, Fire, *Agni*, is often referred to in the Scriptures ; and we are asked, again and again, to worship Agni. This Agni, this Flame—is it an *outer thing* ? The visible Flame is most wonderful. The sun is a mighty Flame, and it is not the only sun nor the biggest ; there are mightier, brighter suns. Prof. Kepteyn of Holland has recently discovered that the star Rigel gives out the light of 12,000 of our suns and is 15,000 times as big as the sun of our system ; and there are suns bigger even than Rigel. Wonderful are these suns. Some of them, we are told, are abodes of life. It seems to me that the Flame referred to in the Scriptures is that of which the visible flame is but a symbol,—the Flame within man, the Flame of the Heart. It is called, in one

passage, *Brahmagni*, the Flame of the Eternal. A Vedic text has it that Agni came from the abode of the Immortals and entered the house of mortals as a guest. The Flame of the Eternal has entered the heart of man : do we honour it as a guest of God ?

The thing named Fire has, in different countries, been regarded, as it seems to me, with special honour as an outer symbol of the Inner Flame. Vestal Virgins guarded the Temple-Fire in ancient Italy ; the Jews carried Fire with them on march ; the simple Russian peasant even, to-day, salutes fire saying :—“ Welcome to thee ” ; in Korea fire is never put out ; Jehovah spoke to Moses from the fire ; and every Moses, every hero, has to hear the word of the Ideal from the fire ; Arjuna's vision of Krishna was that of a being ‘ blazing as fire,’ ‘ with flaming mouth,’ with the ‘ Face of Sacrificial Fire.’ To live a rich, strong life, we must keep alive the Flame in our hearts.

How to keep it alive ? What fuel to bring it, what things to offer to feed the Flame ? *Dravya* is one of the things, the Gita says, we should offer as a sacrifice to keep alive the Flame. *Dravya* means *wealth, money*. We

gather silver and gold ; do we offer them as a sacrifice, a *Brahmagni* ? Often we refuse to make them an oblation on the altar of service ; is it a wonder our *hearts* become cold, the Flame becomes thin and weak ? There is something more difficult to sacrifice even than wealth ; it is referred to as *indrya*. Offer your senses. How ? By self-control. The more we run after sensations, the less bright becomes the Flame in our hearts. Control your senses and the Flame will grow stronger and brighter. Yet a third offering to this Flame is that of *vidya*, *knowledge*. A strange idea this, some will say. We study at the College to get knowledge, I hear some say, yet you ask us to make a *sacrifice of knowledge* ! I admit the modern age has more *knowledge*, more *vidya* than they had in ancient India ; knowledge—scientific, historic, geographical, economic, political,—is wider, to day ; there are bigger libraries ; there are more schools and colleges and universities. But is knowledge, *vidya*, the end of life ? *Vidya* must become *gnan* ; knowledge must become the ‘fire of wisdom’ (*gnanagni*) of which the Gita speaks. In *Gnana agni*,—the “Fire of Wisdom”—

ancient Aryans were superior to the modern man. Mere *knowledge* only sharpens intellect and enables some to cut their neighbours' throats ; mere science becomes an agency of destruction ; and the world is not any the better for that culture which comes to slay. Knowledge that is proud and aggressive will not heal the nations. Knowledge must become *gnan* : scholarship must be inspired by a vision of Humanity, a vision of the Heart. There is no freedom without a vision of the Heart. For to be free is to be *disinterested* ; to be free is to have love. Kant saw freedom in *duty*. The sages of India saw freedom in that Wisdom of the Heart which makes man *disinterested*. Edward Carpenter in his beautiful little book :—“*A Visit to a Gnani*” makes a bad blunder when he says :—“In the East the will constitutes the great Path ; but in the West the path has been made specially through Love.” The method of Plato and Jesus is, also, the method of Krishna. Not without reason has Hindu India worshipped the Krishna-life as the *avatara* of Love. The path of Love has been trodden by several mystics, in the East as well as the West.

*Bhakti marga* has been found congenial by many Indian mystics, Hindus and Muslims,—in Bengal, in Sind, in Hindusthan, in Southern India. Read the story of Sur Das. They call him “the blind bard of Agra”. He had a vision of Krishna, according to a popular story ; and after that “all was darkness” for this devotee ; he became “blind” ! The vision of the Heart made him “blind” to other things ! With what love he sings of Krishna, —*Shyam Sundar*, as he calls him :

“ Night and day my eyes shed tears  
It is always the rainy season with me  
Since Shyam went away !”

In another poem he says :

“ Brij is now drowned in my tears.  
Why don't you come to deliver it ? ”

Hear him sing again out of the vision of an anguished heart :

“ Mine eyes are rivers ;  
My limbs are tired ;  
And the fixed stars are away.”

For Krishna is away !

In the heart of Sur Das was a Flame of love.

Shri Krishna, as I said, speaks of the “ Fire of Wisdom”. And ‘knowledge’ flames into

love when it enters the *heart*. To young men, therefore, I say : Gather all the knowledge you can ; then come and pour it into the Flame of the Heart so that it may be purified and may shine as Love.

## SREE KRISHNA STAND!

"Learn thou this (Wisdom) by reverence, by questioning, and by service." (Gita, IV, 34.)

THERE is a beautiful story which tradition tells of Shri Krishna. He came uninvited one day to see Pundarik. Pundarik served with love his parents; Pundarik was a devotee of God. And in the day Shri Krishna came to his house, his heart was filled with joy. There lay a brick near by, Pundarik pointed to it and requested Shri Krishna to stand on the brick so that others might see his Beloved Master! On some brick of the House—a building, the house of Freedom, do we see Shri Krishna stand? Do we try to see the Master at this hour? To see Him in our Struggle is to have the wisdom we need to sustain the Struggle to victory.

Reverence and questioning are two of the



things mentioned in the text as pre-conditions of Wisdom. Reverence and questioning—*both* are needed. They are often supposed to exclude each other. The two are really complementary. The one is incomplete without the other. I know of young men who have *reverence* but not the *questioning spirit*. I know of some others who question, argue, discuss, but have no reverence. Not such the men who can help India. Through knowledge, through a comparative study of the history and cultures and civilisations of other nations, let the spirit of questioning grow in young men. Why are Indians left behind in the race? What is there wrong with us? What are our weaknesses, our faults, our sins? Yes,—let us confess our sins before man and God. Let us carefully analyse the present situation, carefully study the defects, the imperfections, the sad prostration of an ancient people. Let the spirit of questioning grow in us. But let, also, the spirit of *pranipata*, of reverence, for India, of faith in her genius and her future be strong within us. Do you see the people's defects and say: "This India—I shall have little to do with it"? Do you see

the people prostrate and say : " This India, there is no hope for it unless it imitates England, France, America " ? Then you cannot serve Her. For this India must not become a big England, an imitation of Western nations. India must be herself or she has no right to live. India must be true to her own genius, loyal to the spirit of her history, faithful to the purpose and inspiration of her own life. Despite the lovelessness and dissociation in our life, despite the folly and feebleness of our mendicant politics, despite our weakness and shameful subjection of centuries, do you see an India worthy of your faith in her future, worthy of your reverence and love, an India with a soul burning still with something of the sacred Flame ? Does the Soul of India still appear to you beautiful ? Then, indeed, may you be a servant of the Nation.

To know India is to have reverence for Her. The more I study the past, the more I understand how great is the world's need of India. Two great truths, as it seems to me, has India striven to live through the ages, the truths concerning the *Atman* and *Ahimsa*. Read the lives of her Seers, the Songs of Her

poets, the systems of Her thinkers, and you are impressed with the twofold teaching ; (1) have fellowship with the spiritual life that flows into the Universe, and (2) practise *ahimsa*. I believe the world needs the inspiration of these two great truths concerning the *atman* and *ahimsa*. If India's young men will accept and assimilate these two truths, they will, I profoundly believe, achieve Freedom for India and show the world a new way for settlement of national and international disputes. The first lesson in the Scripture of my life is *ahimsa*. And I have spent anxious hours by day and night thinking of how to guard the *purity* of the Swaraj Movement. I believe that India fell in the day the truth of *ahimsa* was trampled upon. We did *himsa* to millions\* of our fellow-countrymen by trampling upon their human rights ; and the Hindu and the Muslim were at daggers drawn one to the other. So was India's strength sapped ; so did the 'stranger' put fetters upon Her whom we adore as our Mother.

Out of the truth of *ahimsa* grows naturally the great thought of *service*. Reverence is needed ; investigation, questioning is needed, —if we would have the Wisdom to achieve

Freedom. It is time for young men to work with the "humbler classes", There must be a reconstruction of our methods in the light of the values of *mass-consciousness*. *Katha Kathas*, *sankirtans*, and village schools can do much to spread the national message. Cheap literature can do much. Centres of distribution should, I think, be opened up in each Province, and papers in vernacular should be started. Leaflets for women should be published. The intuition and idealism of women will enrich the life of India abundantly. The message of Freedom should be carried to the villages. The moving spirit of work of this character should be young men's *Gita Classes*. Only the young men who endeavour to draw nigh to a Spiritual Centre of life may hope to make the power of the Krishna-life and Krishna-message felt by others. An Organisation of Young-men is needed to help India to achieve her Freedom: and the young men who would help must have hearts of purity and love. Unseen influences I believe, are waiting to help us; unseen Angels looking from the flowers and trees and through the stars, are waiting to befriend us, if we will keep the heart pure.

befriend us, if we will keep the heart pure.

Piteous is the world's need of Krishna's message. The mediæval foundations of religion are undermined in Europe ; secularism is bankrupt ; and the World-War showed that the 'reformed' churches had but little power of the Spirit left. The Soul of Europe is sick ; Civilisation is strangling spirituality ; intellect divorced from the great intuitions of the soul is become separative, destructive. The God of the Nations summons India to enter upon her ministry of help and healing. Will she enter upon her world-mission ? In the crash of modern civilisation, Krishna calls us to bear witness to his Wisdom, He calls us, the world's great need calls us, the Soul of Humanity seeking in the night for the light of a new Ideal calls Young India for a great Sacrifice. Are young men ready to endure, suffer, to pray for "more sufferings" "more sufferings" so that India may be glorified ? Krishna calls us,—each one of us. Shall we prepare ourselves to tread the Path of Achievement and Emancipation ? Shall we get ready to meet the Master's Call with the answer of self-offering ?

Has thou need of me to-day ?  
Take and use my all ;  
Take and use my poverty and pain ;  
Take my living, take my breath ;  
Take my dying, take my death ;  
Take and use my life  
And live *thou*, Mother-India ! ✓

16-2-1953  
J. Krishna  
M. S. H.

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